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THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF A PHAETON.

BY WILLIAM BLACK, AUTHOR OF "A DAUGHTER OF HETH," ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

ARMAGEDDON.

*"Let us go hence, my songs; she will not hear.
Let us go hence together without fear;
Keep silence now, for singing-time is over,
And over all old things and all things dear.
She loves not you nor me as all we love her.
Yea, though we sang as angels in her ear,
She would not hear."*

Blow, wind, and shriek, tempests! Let all the gases be lowered, and thunder roll through the gloom! Tremble, ye forests of canvas, where twisted oaks and shattered elms bear witness to the agony of the scene; and let the low music of the violoncello and the throbbing of muffled drums announce that dreadful deeds are brewing! Alas! we had no such thrilling accompaniments to the tragedy being enacted before our eyes on the fair shores of Grasmere. The lake lay as blue and as calm as though no perplexed and suffering human souls were by its side; and instead of the appropriate darkness of a theatre, we had the far hills trembling under the white haze of the mid-day heat. Yet my Lady saw none of these things. Her heart was rent asunder by the troubles of the young folks under her charge: until I seemed to see in her speechless eyes a sort of despairing wish that she had never been born.

"And yet," I say to her, "you don't
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see the worst of it. If Arthur is driven away by Bell, a far more terrible thing will befall him."

"What?" says Queen Titania, with the clear, brown eyes grown solemn.

"He will marry somebody else."

"Bah!" she says, peevishly; "is this a time to be thinking of jests?"

"Indeed, I know one who never discovered the joke of it. But don't you think that he will?"

"I wish he would."

"There's little Katty Tatham, now, would give her ears to marry him."

"You always fancy girls are very anxious to marry."

"I never asked but one, and I found her ready enough."

"I refused you."

"You made a pretence of doing so."

"I wish I had kept to my first resolution."

"I wish you had, since you say so. But that's of no consequence. I saved you from committing suicide, as I have frequently told you."

The small creature looks up, and with an excellent calmness and self-composure, says—

"I suppose you never heard of a young man—I thought him very silly at the time, myself—who walked about all night, one night at Eastbourne; and in the morning—long before my mamma was up—aroused the servants, and sent

in a letter—a sort of ultimatum it was—with all sorts of vows of vengeance and despair. That young man wasn't Arthur Ashburton; but when you complain of Arthur's mad follies——”

“Madam,” I say to her, “your sex protects you: go and live. But when you say that *I* complain of Arthur, and in the next breath accuse me of always bringing forward excuses for him——”

But what was the use of continuing the argument? My Lady smiles with a fine air of triumph; confident that her ingenious logic had carried the day, as, in fact, it generally does. The man who endeavours to follow, seize, and confront the airy statements made by a lady in a difficulty, resembles nothing so much as a railway-train trying to catch a butterfly; and who would not back the butterfly?

We were now placed in an uncommonly awkward fix. The arrival of Arthur at Grasmere had produced a complication such as we had not dreamt of; for now it appeared as if the situation were to be permanent. We had somehow fancied that, as soon as he overtook us, some definite arrangement would be come to, settling at once and for ever those rival pretensions which were interfering with our holiday in a serious manner. At last, my Lady had considered, the great problem was to be finally solved; and, of course, the solution lay in Bell's hands. But, now Arthur had come, who was to move in the matter? It was not for Bell, at all events, to come forward and say to one of the young men “Go!” and to the other “Stay!” Neither of them, on the other hand, seemed disposed to do anything bold and heroic in order to rid us of this grievous embarrassment; and so the first afternoon passed away—with some more walking, visiting, and boating—in a stolidly and hopelessly reserved and dreary fashion.

But every one of us knew that a mine lay close by, and that at any moment a match might be flung into it. Every word that was uttered was weighed beforehand. As for Tita, the poor little woman was growing quite

pale and fatigued with her constant and nervous anxiety; until one of the party privately told her that if no one else asked Bell to marry, he would himself, and so end our troubles.

“I don't know what to do,” she said, sitting down and folding her hands on her knees, while there was quite a pitiable expression on her face. “I am afraid to leave them for a moment. Perhaps now they may be fighting—but that does not much matter, for Bell can't have gone downstairs to dinner yet. Don't you think you could get Arthur to go away?”

“Of what use would that be? He went away before; and then we had our steps dogged, and letters and telegrams in every town. No; let us have it out here.”

“I wish you and he would have it out between you. That poor girl is being frightened to death.”

“Say but one brief word, my dear, and Arthur will be feeding the fishes among the reeds of Grasmere before the morning. But would you really like Bell to send Arthur off? Is he really to be told that she won't marry him? They used to be pets of yours. I have seen you regard them, as they walked before us along the lanes, with an amiable and maternal smile. Is it all over? Would you like him to go away and never see us any more?”

“Oh, I don't know;” cries Tita, with the anxiety and pity and tenderness in her eyes almost grown into tears.

That was a nice little project of hers with which we had started from the old tavern in Holborn. It had been tolerably successful. If Bell were not in love with the Lieutenant, there could be no doubt, at least, that the Lieutenant was hopelessly and over head and ears in love with Bell. It was a pretty comedy for a time; and my Lady had derived an infinite pleasure and amusement from watching the small and scarcely perceptible degrees by which the young folks got drawn towards each other. What would have been the beautiful pictures of English scenery we had driven through, without two young lovers in the foreground, trying

to read their fate in each other's eyes, and affording us elderly folks all manner of kindly and comic reminiscences!

It had all turned out very well; until, suddenly, came the revelation that the greatest happiness of the greatest number had demanded a human victim; and here he was before us, with gory locks and piteous eyes, demanding justice. Never before had my Lady fully realized what was meant in the final sending away of Arthur; and now that she saw before her all the consequences of her schemes, she was struck to the heart, and dared scarcely ask for some re-assurance as to what she had done.

"Oh," she says, "I hope I have done right."

"You! Why should you assume any responsibility? Let the young folks arrange their own affairs as they like best. Do you think, if Bell had been willing to break with Arthur, that your packing off the Lieutenant to Germany would prevent her making the acquaintance of some other man? And she has not broken off with Arthur. If she does so, she does so, and there's an end of it; but why should you vex yourself about it?"

She was not to be comforted. She shook her head, and continued to sit there, with her eyes full of anxious cares. When, at length, she went off to dress hastily for dinner, it was with a determination that from that moment she would endeavour to help Arthur in every way she could. That was the form her repentance took.

If the young man had only known that he had secured such a valuable ally! But just at this time—amid all our perplexity as to who should first precipitate matters—what should the reckless young man do but startle us all with a declaration which wholly altered the aspect of affairs!

We were seated at dinner. It was in the private room we had engaged; and the evening light, reflected from the lake outside, was shining upon Tita's gentle face as she sat at the head of the table. Bell was partly in shadow. The two young men, by some fatal mis-

chance, sat next each other: probably because neither wished to take the unfair advantage offered by the empty seat next to Bell.

Well, something had occurred to stir up the smouldering fires of Arthur's wrath. He had been treated with great and even elaborate courtesy by everybody—but more particularly by Bell—during our afternoon rambles; but something had evidently gone wrong. There was a scowl on the fair and handsome face that was naturally pleasant, boyish, and agreeable in appearance. He maintained a strict silence for some little time after dinner was served; although my Lady strove to entice him into the general talk. But presently he looked up, and, addressing her, said in a forcedly merry way—

"Should you like to be startled?"

"Yes, please," Tita would probably have said—so anxious is she to humour everybody; but just then he added, in the same reckless and defiant tone—

"What if I tell you I am going to get married?"

An awful consternation fell upon us.

"Oh," says my Lady, in a hurried fashion, "you are joking, Arthur."

"No, I am not. And when I present the young lady to you, you will recognize an old friend of yours, whom you haven't seen for years."

To put these words down on paper can give no idea whatever of the ghastly appearance of jocularity which accompanied them, nor of the perfectly stunning effect they produced. The women were appalled into silence. Von Rosen stared, and indifferently played with the stem of his wine-glass. For mere charity's sake, I was driven into filling up this horrible vacuum of silence; and so I asked—with what show of appropriateness married people may judge—whether he had formed any plans for the buying of furniture.

Furniture! 'Tis an excellent topic. Everybody can say something about it. My Lady, with a flash of gratitude in her inmost soul, seized upon the cue, and said—

"Oh, Arthur, have you seen our side-board?"

Now, when a young man tells you he is about to get married, it is rather an odd thing to answer "*Oh, Arthur—or Tom, or Dick, or Harry, as the case may be—have you seen our sideboard?*" But all that my Lady wanted was to speak; for Arthur, having accomplished his intention of startling us, had relapsed into silence.

"Of course he has seen the sideboard," I say for him. "He was familiar with the whole of that fatal transaction."

"Why fatal?" says the Lieutenant.

You see, we were getting on.

"Bell will tell you the history. No? Then I will—for the benefit of all folks who may have to furnish a house; and I hope Arthur—after the very gratifying announcement he has just made—will take heed."

"Oh, yes," says Arthur, gaily, "let us have all your experiences about house matters. It is never too soon to learn."

"Very well. There was once a sideboard which lived in Dorking——"

Here the Lieutenant begged to know what piece of furniture a sideboard was; and when that was explained to him, the legend was continued:—

"It was a very grand old sideboard of carved oak, which had regarded the dinner-parties of several generations from its recess. At last, it had to be sold at public auction. A certain agreeable and amiable lady, who lives on the banks of the river Mole, saw this sideboard, and was told she might have it for a trifle of ninety-five guineas. She is an impressionable person. The sideboard occupied her thoughts day and night; until at last her husband—who is the most obliging person in the world, and has no other desire in life than to obey her wishes——"

Here there were some interruptions at the further end of the table. Silence having been restored, the speaker went on to say that the sideboard was bought.

"It was the beginning of the troubles of that wretched man. When you have an old oak sideboard that farmers' wives will drive twenty miles to look at, you must have old oak chairs. When you have old oak chairs, a microcephalous

idiot would know that you must have an old oak table. By slow degrees the home of this unhappy man underwent transformation. Rooms that had been familiar to him and homely, became gloomy halls which ghosts of a cheerful temperament would have fled from in despair. People came to dinner, and sat in the high-backed chairs with an expression of resigned melancholy on their faces; and now and again an unlucky lady of weight and dimensions would, on trying to rise from the table, tilt up the chair and save herself from falling by clinging to the arm of the man next her. For of course you can't have castors on old oak chairs, and when the stumps of wood have got well settled into the thick Turkey carpet, how is the chair to be sent back?"

"That is quite absurd," says a voice. "Everyone says our dining-room chairs are exceedingly comfortable."

"Yours are; but this is another matter. Now, the lady of the house did not stop at oak furniture and solemn carpets and severe curtains. She began to dress herself and her children to match her furniture. She cut the hair of her own babes to suit that sideboard. There was nothing heard of but broad lace collars, and black velvet garments, and what not; so that the boys might correspond with the curtains and not be wholly out of keeping with the chairs. She made a dress for her own mother, which that estimable lady contemplated with profound indignation, and asked how she could be expected to appear in decent society in a costume only fit for a fancy ball."

"It was a most beautiful dress, wasn't it, Bell?" says a voice.

"But far worse was to come. She began to acquire a taste for everything that was old and marvellous. She kept her husband for hours stifling in the clammy atmosphere of Soho, while she ransacked dirty shops for scraps of crockery that were dear in proportion to their ugliness. During these hours of waiting he thought of many things—suicide among the number. But what he chiefly ruminated on was the pleasing and ingenious theory that in decoration

everything that is old is genuine, and everything that is new is meretricious. He was not a person of profound accomplishments——"

"Hear, hear!" says a voice.

——"and so he could not understand why he should respect the intentions of artists who, a couple of centuries ago, painted fans, and painted them badly, and why he should treat with scorn the intentions of artists who at this moment paint fans and paint them well. He could not acquire any contempt for a French vase in gold and white and rose-colour, even when it was put beside a vase some three hundred years of age which was chiefly conspicuous by its defective curves and bad colour. As for Italian mirrors and blue and white china, he received without emotion the statement that all the world of London was wildly running after these things. He bore meekly the contemptuous pity bestowed on him when he expressed the belief that modern Venetian glass was, on the whole, a good deal more beautiful than any he had seen of the old, and when he proposed to buy some of it as being more within the means of an ordinary person. But when at last—after having waited a mortal hour in a dingy hole in a dingy thoroughfare near Leicester Square—he was goaded into rebellion, and declared that he did not care a brass farthing, nor even the half of that sum, when an object of art was made, how it was made, where it was made, or by whom it was made, so long as it fulfilled its first duty of being good in design and workmanship and agreeable to the eye, it seemed to him that the end of his conjugal happiness was reached. Nothing short of a legal separation could satisfy the injured feelings of his wife. That she should have to live with this Goth and outer barbarian seemed to her monstrous. But at this time it occurred to her that she might find some use for even such a creature, considering that he was still possessed of a little money——"

"You seldom omit to bring that forward," says the voice.

——"and that there was a drawing-

room to be transformed. Then he beheld strange things. Phantom curtains of black and gold began to steal into the house. Hidden mysteries dwelt in the black, yellow, and red of the carpet; and visitors paused upon the threshold for a moment to collect their wits, after the first stun of looking in. Then all the oil of Greenland was unable to light up this gloomy chamber in the evening; and so there came down from London mighty sheets of mirrors to be let into the walls. 'Now,' said this reckless woman to her husband, 'we must have a whole series of dinner-parties to ask everybody to come and see what the house looks like.'"

"Oh, what a story!" cries that voice again. "Bell, did you ever hear the like of that? I wonder he does not say we put the prices on the furniture and invited the people to look at the cost. You don't believe it, do you, Count von Rosen?"

"No, Madame," said the Lieutenant, "I do not believe any lady exists such as that one which he describes."

"But he means me," says Tita.

"Then what shall I say?" continues the young man. "May I say that I have never seen—not in England, not in Germany—any rooms so beautifully arranged in the colours as yours? And it was all your own design? Ha!—I know he is calling attention to that for the purpose of complimenting you—that is it."

Of course, that mean-spirited young man took every opportunity of flattering and cajoling Bell's chief adviser; but what if he had known at this moment that she had gone over to the enemy, and mentally vowed to help Arthur by every means in her power?

She could not do much for him that evening. After dinner we had a little music, but there was not much life or soul in it. Arthur could sing an ordinary drawing-room song as well as another, and we half expected him to reveal his sorrows in that way, but he coldly refused. The Lieutenant, at my Lady's urgent request, sat down to the piano and sang the song that tells of the maiden who lived "im Winkel am

Thore ; " but there was an absence of that spontaneity which generally characterized his rough and ready efforts in music, and after missing two of the verses, he got over his task with an air of relief. It was very hard that the duty of dispelling the gloom should have been thrown on Bell ; but when once she sat down and struck one or two of those minor chords which presaged one of the old ballads, we found a great refuge from our embarrassment. We were in another world then—with Chloe plaiting flowers in her hair, and Robin hunting in the greenwood with his fair lady, who was such a skilful archer, and all the lasses and lads kissing each other round the Maypole. With what a fine innocence Bell sang of these merry goings-on ! I dare say a good many well-conducted young persons would have stopped with the stopping of the dancing, and never told what happened after the fiddler had played "Packington's Pound," and "Sellinger's Round." But Bell, with no thought of harm, went merrily on—

"Then after an hour
They went to a bower,
And played for ale and cakes,
And kisses too—
Until they were due
The lasses held the stakes.
The girls did then begin
To quarrel with the men,
And bid them take their kisses back
And give them their own again !"

In fact, there was a very bright smile of amusement on her face, and you could have fancied that her singing was on the point of breaking into laughing ; for how could the girl know that my Lady was looking rather reserved at the mention of that peculiar sort of betting ? But then the concluding verse comes back to the realms of propriety ; and Bell sang it quite gently and tenderly, as though she, too, were bidding good-bye to her companions in a frolic :—

" 'Good night,' says Harry ;
'Good night,' says Mary ;
'Good night,' says Dolly to John ;
'Good night,' says Sue
To her sweetheart Hugh ;
'Good night,' says every one.
Some walked and some did run,
Some loitered on the way,

And bound themselves by kisses twelve
To meet next holiday—
And bound themselves by kisses twelve
To meet next holiday !"

"Mademoiselle," said Von Rosen, coming forward to her with quite a paternal air, "you must not sing any more to-night. You are always too ready to sing for us—and you do not reflect of the fatigue." And as Bell stood rather embarrassed by this exhibition of thoughtfulness, and as Arthur glowered gloomily out from his corner, the Lieutenant made some excuse for himself and me, and presently we found ourselves out by the shores of the lake, smoking a contemplative cigar under the clear starlight.

"Now, my good friend," he said, suddenly, "tell me—is it a lie, yes ?"

"Is what a lie ?"

"That foolish story that he will be married."

"Oh, you mean Arthur. I had almost forgotten what he said at dinner. Well, perhaps it is a lie—young men in love are always telling lies about something or other."

"Heh !" says the Lieutenant, peevishly ; "you do know it is not true. How can it be true ?"

"Of course you want me to say that I think it true—you boys are so unreasonable. I don't know anything about it. I don't care. If he wants to marry some girl or other, I hope he may. The wish is perhaps not very friendly——"

"Now look at this !" says the Lieutenant, quite fiercely, and in a voice so loud that I was afraid it might reach the windows of the hotel that were now sending a yellow light over the lawn : "if he means to marry some other young lady, why is he here ? He has no business here. Why does he come here to annoy everyone and make himself miserable ? He ought to go away ; and it is you that should send him away."

"Bless me ! Surely a man may come and stop at an hotel at Grasmere without asking my permission. I have no right to forbid Arthur remaining in Westmoreland or any other county. He does not ask me to pay his bills."

"This that Madame says it is quite true, then," says the Lieutenant, angrily, "that you care only for your own comfort!"

"When Madame says such things, she retains the copyright. Don't let her hear you repeating them, if you are wise, or you'll get into trouble. As for myself, this cigar is excellent, and you may let your vexation take any shape that is handy. I foresaw that we should soon have two Arthurs in the field."

The tall young soldier walked up and down for a minute or two, evidently in great distress, and at last he stopped, and said, in a very humble voice,—

"My dear friend, I beg your pardon. I do not know what I say when I see this pitiful fellow causing so much pain to your wife and to Mademoiselle. Now, when you look at them—not at me at all—will not you endeavour to do something?"

He was no great hand at diplomacy, this perplexed and stammering Uhlan, who seemed bent on inflicting his anger on his cigar. To introduce the spectacle of two suffering women so as to secure the banishment of his rival was a very transparent device, and might have provoked laughter, but that Grasmere is deep, and a young man in love exceedingly irritable.

"He says he is going to marry some other girl: what more would you like? You don't want to carry off all his sweethearts from the unfortunate youth?"

"But it is not true."

"Very well."

"And you talk of carrying off his sweetheart. Mademoiselle was never his sweetheart, I can assure you of that; and besides I have not carried her off, nor am likely to do that, so long as this wretched fellow hangs about, and troubles her much with his complainings. Now, if she will only say to me that I may send him away, I will give you my word he is not in this part of the country, no, not one day longer."

"Take care. You can't commit murder in this country with impunity, except in one direction. You may dispose of your wife as you please; but if you murder any reasonable being, you will suffer."

Indeed, the Lieutenant, pacing up and down the narrow path by the lake, looked really as if he would have liked to catch Arthur up and dash him against Mercator's Projection, or some other natural phenomenon; and the more he contemplated his own helplessness in the matter, the more he chafed and fumed. The moon rose slowly from behind the hills, and ran along the smooth surface of the lake, and found him nursing this volcano of wrath in his breast. But suddenly, as he looked up, he saw the blind of one of the hotel-windows thrust aside, and he knew that Bell was there, contemplating the wonderful beauties of the sky. He ceased his growlings. A more human expression came over his face; and then he proposed that we should go in, lest the ladies should want to say good-night.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE LAST OF GRASMERE.

*"Muss aus dem Thal jetzt scheiden,
Wo alles Lust und Klang;
Das ist mein herbstes Leiden,
Mein letzter Gang!
Dich, mein stilles Thal,
Grüss' ich tausend Mal!
Das ist mein herbstes Leiden,
Mein letzter Gang!"*

A STILL greater surprise was in store for us next morning. My Lady had taken leave to discredit altogether the story of Arthur's approaching marriage. She regarded it as merely the wild and reckless utterance of vexation. For the young man's sake, she hoped that no one would make any allusion to this topic; and that he himself would allow it to fall into the rapidly running waters of oblivion.

Now, he had on the previous day despatched a message to Kendal to the effect that the dogcart should be at once sent to him, if the cob had quite recovered. He proposed to accompany us as far as Penrith or Carlisle; further than that he said he did not care to go. But as the trap was likely to arrive that forenoon, and as he had to see the man who would bring it, he begged us to start

for our forenoon's walk by ourselves—a proposal which was accepted with equanimity by the whole of our party. The young man was quite complaisant. My Lady was very attentive to him; and we thought we should start for our ramble with the consciousness that we had left behind us no wretched creature eating away his heart with thoughts of revenge.

Somehow this mood passed rapidly away from him. The spectacle of Bell and the Lieutenant planing with a great joy the outline of our morning excursion seemed to bring back all the bitterness of his spirit. He was silent for a long time—until, indeed, we were ready to leave the hotel; and then, as he accompanied us to the door, he produced a letter, and said, with an affectation of carelessness—

“By the way, I have a message for you. It was lucky I thought of going round to the post-office this morning, or I should probably have missed this. Katty Tatham desires to be remembered to you all, and hopes you will bring her back a piece of Scotch heather to show that you went all the way. Ta-ta!”

He waved his hand to us, and went in. My Lady looked at me solemnly, and said nothing for a moment, until Bell had passed along the road a little bit, along with the Lieutenant.

“Is that another story, do you think? Do you believe Katty Tatham is actually in correspondence with him?”

“He did not say so.”

“He meant we should infer it, at all events; and that, after what he said last night——”

Tita was dreadfully puzzled. She could understand how vexation of spirit might drive a foolish young man into making a statement not wholly in accordance with fact; but that he should repeat this legend in another way, and bring the name of a lady into it—no, Tita could scarcely believe that all this was untrue.

She hurried up to Bell, and placed her hand within the young lady's arm.

“Is it not strange that Katty Tatham should be writing to Arthur, if that was what he meant?”

“Oh no, not at all. They are very old friends; and, besides, she does all the letter-writing for her papa, who is almost blind now, poor old man. And what a nice girl she is, isn't she, Tita?”

Of course we were all anxious to persuade each other that Katty Tatham was the very nicest girl in all England, although none of us except Bell had seen her for two or three years; and it was wonderful how this sort of talk brightened up the spirits of our party. The Lieutenant grew quite interested in Katty Tatham. He was nearly praising her himself, although he had never heard her name until that moment. In short, the four of us were ready to swear that this poor little Katty was just as pleasant and honest and pretty and charming a girl as was to be found anywhere in the world, or out of it, and that it was most singular that she had never married. Tita declared that she knew that Katty had had ever so many offers; and that it was not alone the frailties of her father that kept her from marrying.

“She must have been waiting for some one,” said the small woman, rather slyly.

What a morning it was! As we walked along the white road, in the stillness of the heat, the blue waters of Grasmere glimmered through the trees. Never had we seen the colours of Bell's Fairyland so intense. The hills in the distance had a silvery haze thrown over their pale purples, but here around us the sharp clear colours blazed in the sunshine—the deep blue of Grasmere, the yellow-white of the road, and the various rich greens and browns of the trees and the shore. And then, by and by, we came in sight of Rydal Water. How different it was to the weird and gloomy lake we had found two evenings before lying buried between the hills. Now it seemed shallow and fair and light, with a grey shimmer of wind across its surface, breaking here and there the perfect mirror of the mountain-slopes and woods. In the absolute silence around us we could hear the water-hens calling to each other; and out there

among the reeds we could see them paddling about, dipping their heads into the lake, and fluttering their wings. We walked on to Rydal bridge, and had a look at the clear brown rivulet rushing down its narrow channel between the thick underwood and the trees. We took the Lieutenant up to Rydal Mount—the small house with its tree-fuschias standing bright and warm in the sunshine—and from the plateau in front beheld the great fair landscape around the silver-white lake of Windermere. We went up to the falls of Rydal Beck, and, in short, went the round of the ordinary tourist—all for the sake of our Prussian friend, we persuaded ourselves. Bell was his guide, and he looked as though he would have liked to be led for ever. Perhaps he took away with him but a confused recollection of all the interesting things she told him; but surely, if the young man has a memory, he cannot even now have forgotten that bright, clear, warm day that was spent about Rydal, with a certain figure in the foreground that would have lent a strange and gracious charm to a far less beautiful picture.

"Is it not an odd thing," I say to Queen Titania, who has been pulling and plaiting wild-flowers in order to let the young folks get ahead of us, "how you associate certain groups of unheeding trees and streams and hills with various events in your life, and can never get over the impression that they wear such and such a look?"

"I daresay it's quite true, but I don't understand," she says, with the calm impertinence that distinguishes her.

"If you will cease for a moment to destroy your gloves by pulling these weeds, I will tell you a story which will convey my meaning to your small intellect."

"Oh, a story," she says, with a beautiful sigh of resignation.

"There was a young lady once upon a time who was about to leave England and go with her mamma to live in the south-west of France. They did not expect to come back for a good many years, if ever they came back. And so a young man of their acquaintance got

up a farewell banquet at Richmond, and several friends came down to the hotel. They sat in a room overlooking the windings of the river, and the soft masses of foliage, and the far landscape stretching on to Windsor. The young man had, a little time before, asked the young lady to marry him, and she refused; but he bore her no malice——"

"He has taken care to have his revenge since," says Tita.

"You interrupt the story. They sat down to dinner on this summer evening. Everyone was delighted with the view; but to this wretched youth it seemed as though the landscape were drowned in sadness, and the river a river of unutterable grief. All the trees seemed to be saying good-bye, and when the sun went down, it was as though it would never light up any other day with the light of bygone days. The mist came over the trees. The evening fell, slow, and sad, and grey. Down by the stream a single window was lit up, and that made the melancholy of the picture even more painful, until the young man, who had eaten nothing and drank nothing, and talked to people as though he were in a dream, felt as if all the world had grown desolate, and was no more worth having——"

"If I had only known," says Tita, in a voice so low and gentle that you could scarcely have heard it.

"And then, you know, the carriages came round; and he saw her, with the others, come downstairs prepared to leave. He bade good-night to the mamma, who got into the carriage. He bade good-night to her; and she was about to get in too, when she suddenly remembered that she had left some flowers in the dining-room, and ran back to fetch them. Before he could overtake her she had got the flowers and was coming back through the passage into the hall. 'It isn't good-night, it is good-bye, we must say'—I think he said something like that—and she held out her hand—and somehow there was a very strange look in her eyes, just as if she were going to cry——. But, you know, there's no use in your crying just now about it."

Tita is pretending to smile, but a certain tremor of the lips is visible; and so the narrator hurries on:—

"Now look here. For the next three months—for the soft-hearted creature had hurriedly whispered that she might return to England then—that young man haunted Richmond. He pretty nearly ruined his prospects in life, and his digestion as well, by continual and solitary dining at the Star and Garter. He could have kissed the stone steps of that hotel, and never entered its vestibule without blessing the white pillars and blank walls. He spent hours in writing letters there—"

"So that the Biarritz boatmen wondered why so many envelopes should have the Richmond postmark," says Tita—though how she could have learnt anything about it goodness only knows.

—"and haled out every complaining friend he could lay hands on to moon about the neighbourhood. But the strange thing is this,—that while he was in love with the vestibule of the hotel, he never saw the twilight fall over the Richmond woods without feeling a cold hand laid on his heart; and when he thinks of the place now—with the mists coming over the trees and the river getting dark—he thinks that the view from Richmond-hill is the most melancholy in all the world."

"And what does he think of Eastbourne?"

"That is a very different thing. He and she got into the quarrelling stage there—"

"In which they have successfully remained to the present time."

"But when she was young and innocent, she would always admit that she had begun the quarrel."

"On the contrary, she told stories in order to please him."

"That motive does not much control her actions now-a-days, at all events."

Here Tita would probably have delivered a crushing reply, but that Bell came up and said—

"What! you two children fighting again! What is it all about? Let me be umpire."

"He says that there is more red in the Scotch daisies than in the English daisies," says Tita, calmly. It was well done. Yet you should hear her lecture her two boys on the enormity of telling a fib.

How sad Bell was to leave the beautiful valley in which we had spent this happy time! Arthur had got his dogcart; and when the phaeton was brought round, the Major's cob was also put-to, and both vehicles stood at the door. We took a last look at Grasmere. "Dich, mein stilles Thal!" said Bell, with a smile; and the Lieutenant looked quite shamefaced with pleasure to hear hear her quote his favourite song. Arthur did not so well like the introduction of those few words. He said, with a certain air of indifference—

"Can I give anybody a seat in the dogcart? It would be a change."

"Oh, thank you; I should like so much to go with you, Arthur," says Tita.

Did you ever see the like of it! The woman has no more notion of considering her own comfort than if she had the hide of an alligator, instead of being, as she is, about the most sensitive creature in the world. However, it is well for her—if she will permit me to say so—that she has people around her who are not quite so impulsively generous; and on this occasion it was obviously necessary to save her from being tortured by the fractious complainings of this young man, whom she would have sympathized with and consoled if the effort had cost her her life.

"No," I say. "That won't do. We have got some stiff hills to climb presently, and some one must remain in the phaeton while the others walk. Now, who looks best in the front of the phaeton?"

"Mamma, of course," says Bell, as if she had discovered a conundrum; and so the matter was settled in a twinkling.

I think it would have been more courteous for Arthur to have given the phaeton precedence, considering who was driving it; but he was so anxious to show off the paces of Major Quinet's

cob, that on starting he gave the animal a touch of the whip that made the light and high vehicle spring forward in a surprising manner.

"Young man, reflect that you are driving the father of a family," I say to him.

Nevertheless, he went through the village of Grasmere at a considerable rate of speed; and when we got well up into the road which goes by the side of the Rothay up into the region of the hills, we found that we had left Tita and her company far behind. Then he began to walk the cob.

"Look here!" he said, quite fiercely; "is Bell going to marry that German fellow?"

"How do I know?" I answer, astonished by the young man's impudence.

"You ought to know. You are her guardian. You are responsible for her——"

"To you?"

"No, not to me; but to your own conscience; and I think the way in which you have entrapped her into making the acquaintance of this man, of whom she knows nothing, doesn't look very well. I may as well say it when I think it. You ought to have known that a girl at her age is ready to be pleased with any novelty; and to draw her away from her old friends—I suppose you can explain it all to your own satisfaction—but I confess that to me——"

I let the young man rave. He went on in this fashion for some little time, getting momentarily more reckless and vehement and absurd in his statements. If Tita had only known what she had escaped.

"But after all," I say to him, when the waters of this deluge of rhetoric had abated, "what does it matter to you? We have allowed Bell to do just as she pleased; and perhaps, for all we know, she may regard Count von Rosen with favour, although she has never intimated such a thing. But what does it matter to you? You say you are going to get married."

"So I shall!" he said, with an unnecessary amount of emphasis.

"Katty Tatham is a very nice girl."

"I should think so! There's no coquetry about her, or that sort of vanity that is anxious to receive flattery from every sort of stranger that is seen in the street——"

"You don't mean to say that that is the impression you have formed of Bell?"

And here all his violence and determination broke down. In a tone of absolute despair he confessed that he was beside himself, and did not know what to do. What should he do? Ought he to implore Bell to promise to marry him? Or should he leave her to her own ways, and go and seek a solution of his difficulties in marrying this pretty little girl down in Sussex, who would make him a good wife and teach him to forget all the sufferings he had gone through? The wretched young fellow was really in a bad way; and there were actually tears in his eyes when he said that several times of late he had wished he had the courage to drown himself.

To tell a young man in this state that there is no woman in the world worth making such a fuss about, is useless. He rejects with scorn the cruel counsels offered by middle age; and sees in them only taunts and insults. Moreover, he accuses middle age of not believing in its own maxims of worldly prudence; and sometimes that is the case.

"At all events," I say to him, "you are unjust to Bell in going on in this wild way. She is not a coquette, nor vain, nor heartless; and if you have anything to complain of, or anything to ask from her, why not go direct to herself, instead of indulging in frantic suspicions and accusations?"

"But—but I cannot," he said. "It drives me mad to see her talking to that man. If I were to begin to speak to her of all this, I am afraid matters would be made worse."

"Well, take your own course. Neither my wife nor myself have anything to do with it. Arrange it among yourselves; only, for goodness' sake, leave the women a little peace."

"Do you think I mean to trouble them?" he says, firing up. "You will see."

What deep significance lay in these words was not inquired into, for we had now to descend from the dogcart. Far behind us we saw that Bell and Count von Rosen were already walking by the side of the phaeton, and Tita talking to them from her lofty seat. We waited for them until they came up, and then we proceeded to climb the steep road that leads up and along the slopes of the mighty Helvellyn.

"Mademoiselle," said the Lieutenant, "who is it will say that there is much rain in your native country? Or did you alarm us so as to make this surprise all the better, yes?"

Indeed, there was scarcely a flake of white in all the blue overhead; and, on the other side of the great valley, the masses of the Wythburn and Borrodaile Fells showed their various hues and tints so that you could almost have fancied them transparent clouds. Then the road descended, and we got down to the solitary shores of Thirlmere, the most Scotch-looking, perhaps, of the English lakes. Here the slopes of the hills are more abrupt, houses are few and far between, there is an aspect of remoteness and a perfect silence reigning over the still water, and the peaks of mountains that you see beyond are more jagged and blue than the rounded hills about Windermere. From the shores of Thirlmere the road again rises, until, when you come to the crest of the height, you find the leaden-coloured lake lying sheer below you, and only a little stone wall guarding the edge of the precipitous slope. We rested the horses here. Bell began to pull them handfuls of Dutch clover and grass. The Lieutenant talked to my Lady about the wonders of mountainous countries as they appeared to people who had been bred in the plains. Arthur looked over the stone wall down into the great valley; and was he thinking, I wonder, whether the safest refuge from all his troubles might not be that low-lying and silent gulf of water that seemed to be miles beneath him?

When we were about to start again, the Lieutenant says to Arthur—

"If you are tired of driving the dog-

cart, you might come into the phaeton, and I will drive your horse on to Keswick."

Who prompted him to make such an offer? Not himself, surely. I had formed a tolerable opinion of his good-nature; but the impatient and fretful manner in which he had of late been talking about Arthur rendered it highly improbable that this suggestion was his own. What did Bell's downcast look mean?

"Thank you, I prefer the dogcart," says Arthur, coldly.

"Oh, Arthur," says Bell, "you've no idea how steep the hill is, going down to Keswick, and in a dogcart too——"

"I suppose," says the young man, "that I can drive a dogcart down a hill as well as anybody else."

"At all events," says the Lieutenant, with something of a frown, "you need not address Mademoiselle as if that she did you harm in trying to prevent your breaking your neck."

This was getting serious; so that there was nothing for it but to bundle the boy into his dogcart and order the Lieutenant to change places with my Lady. As for the writer of these pages—the emotions he experienced while a mad young fellow was driving him in a light and high dogcart down the unconscionable hill that lies above Keswick, he will not attempt to describe. There are occurrences in life which it is better to forget; but if ever he was tempted to evoke maledictions on the hotheadedness, and bad temper, and general insanity of boys in love—Enough! We got down to Keswick in safety.

Now we had got among the tourists, and no mistake. The hotel was all alive with elderly ladies, who betrayed an astonishing acquaintance with the names of the mountains, and apportioned them off for successive days as if they were dishes for luncheon and dinner. The landlord undertook to get us beds somewhere, if only we would come into his coffee-room, which was also a drawing-room, and had a piano in it. He was a portly and communicative person, with a certain magnificence of manner which was impressive. He betrayed quite a

paternal interest in Tita, and calmly and loftily soothed her anxious fears. Indeed, his assurances pleased us much, and we began rather to like him; although the Lieutenant privately remarked that *Clicquot* is a French word, and ought not, under any circumstances whatever, to be pronounced "Clickot."

Then we went down to Derwentwater. It was a warm and clear twilight. Between the dark green lines of the hedges we met maidens in white with scarlet opera-cloaks coming home through the narrow lane. Then we got into the open, and found the shores of the silver lake, and got into a boat and sailed out upon the still waters, so that we could face the wonders of a brilliant sunset.

But all that glow of red and yellow in the north-west was as nothing to the strange gradations of colour that appeared along the splendid range of mountain-peaks beyond the lake. From the remote north round to the south-east they stretched like a mighty wall; and whereas near the gold and crimson of the sunset they were of a warm, roseate, and half-transparent purple, as they came along into the darker regions of the twilight they grew more and

more cold in hue and harsh in outline. Up there in the north they had caught the magic colours so that they themselves seemed but light clouds of beautiful vapour; but as the eye followed the line of twisted and mighty shapes the rose-colour deepened into purple, the purple grew darker and more dark, and greens and blues began to appear over the wooded islands and shores of Derwentwater. Finally, away down there in the south there was a lowering sky, into which rose wild masses of slate-coloured mountains, and in the threatening and yet clear darkness that reigned among these solitudes, we could see but one small tuft of white cloud that clung coldly to the gloomy summit of Glaramara.

That strange darkness in the south boded rain; and, as if in anticipation of the wet, the fires of the sunset went down, and a grey twilight fell over the land. As we walked home between the tall hedges there was a chill dampness in the air; and we seemed to know that we had at last bade good-bye to the beautiful weather that had lit up for us the blue waters and green shores of Grasmere.

[*Note by Queen Titania.*—I begin to think the old lady in Nottinghamshire had some excuse for what she said, although she need not have expressed herself so rudely. Of course it is impossible to put down all that we spoke about on those happy days of our journey; but when all the ordinary talk is *carefully excluded*, and everything *spiteful*, retained, I cannot wonder that a stranger should think that my husband and myself do not lead a *very pleasant life*. It looks very *serious* when it is put in type; whereas we have been driven into all this nonsense of quarrelling merely to temper the excessive sentimentality of those young folks, which is quite *amusing* in its way. Indeed, I am afraid that Bell, although she has never said a word to that effect to me, is *far more deeply pledged* than one who thinks he has a great insight into such affairs has any notion of. I am sure it was none of my doing. If Bell had told me she was engaged to Arthur, nothing could have given me greater pleasure. In the meantime, I hope no one will read too literally the foregoing pages, and think that in our house we are continually treading on lucifer matches and frightening everybody by small explosions. I suppose it is *literary art* that compels such a perversion of the truth! And as for Chapter Twenty-six—which has a great deal of nonsense in it about Richmond—I should think that a very good motto for it would be two lines I once saw quoted somewhere. I don't know who is the author; but they said—

"The legend is as true, I undertake,
As Tristram is, or Lancelot of the Lake."

To be continued.

NOVELS AND THEIR TIMES.

PART II.

THE genius of Madame de Staël, the famous daughter of Necker, was set too high to descend to any direct imitation; but the spirit of Rousseau's writings entered largely into her compositions: there is the same mixture of teaching and preaching with romance and sentimentality, there is something of the same style, and there is a good deal of the same pedantry. But the teaching takes different directions, the constructive power is greater, the romance is more passionate, and the eloquence is more natural. We trace the development of "Corinne" and "Delphine" from the antecedence of the "Nouvelle Héloïse" and "Emile" as Darwin derives the existence of later species from earlier forms of animal life. The relationship is seen in the life itself, in the muscles, in the movement—not as in a mere copy, by the form simulated in death. It is no stuffed image, but a lineal descendant, with added grace, beauty, and vitality. "Corinne" was one of the chief delights of its time. It was published shortly after the date of Madame de Staël's banishment from Paris, where her liberal views of government and her open opposition to a growing despotism made her coteries and her eloquent talk distasteful to Napoleon Buonaparte, then First Consul. She had already published, in 1803, the novel of "Delphine," a clever, unscrupulous, passionate work; in the year 1788 she wrote her famous "Lettres sur les Ouvrages de J. J. Rousseau," which first drew attention to her genius; and in 1793 she wrote her courageous defence of the slandered Queen: her generous nature revolted against injustice and oppression, and she felt the Revolution, which she had welcomed in its opening days, dishonoured by its later acts. She had the courage to publish her "Ré-

flexions sur le Procès de la Reine Marie Antoinette" then, as she had afterwards the courage to denounce the proceedings of Buonaparte's ambition.

Daring, penetrating, innovating thought is to be found in all the pages of "Corinne;" but it is so old a story now as to be new—it is known only by name to the present generation: the young people of to-day are not aware of this amatory guide-book; they prefer the realities of Murray or Bädcker; they ignore the despair which sent Lord Nelvil wandering to Rome, and the passion which possessed him when he saw Corinne the Improvisatrice crowned in the Capitol. They do not know how ardently he made love to her, and how afterwards he turned away from her and married her frigid Scotch half-sister in Scotland, nor how dull that marriage proved, nor how Corinne died of her affliction when she was abandoned. They care nothing about this old grandmother's tale: for the most part they would be bored by its eloquence and thought. Partly owing to its own power, its originalities have become commonplaces; those changes in social life which with startling audacity it contemplated as remote possibilities have become part of the routine of ordinary life; and young ladies nowadays may leave their homes to follow the instincts of their nature, whether these lead them into hospital wards, or musical academies, or learned universities, or medical lecture-rooms, without exciting any expression of displeasure. The popes of modern society are chary of the use of their rights of excommunication; or perhaps it would be truer to say that there is a general dethronement of all popes, and a general relaxation of all authority.

Madame de Staël's defence of a high-minded woman resisting the convention-

alities of a narrow sphere would seem a mere truism to the advanced notions of the girl of our time, who owns "Cometh up as a Flower" for her favourite novel; but it was in its time devoured with secret ecstasy by many a worn-out, enthralled female heart, panting for movement, for action, or for the permission to think. Madame de Staël boldly asserted that an extraordinary woman was the superior of an ordinary man; and, following in Rousseau's track, she suggested that an enlarged education might raise the level of women to so high a point that they might before long cease to be abnormal by becoming intellectual. With consummate skill she opposed the character of the light, intelligent, unimaginative French gentleman, the Comte de Erfeuil, to the deep thought and aspirations of Corinne. The common sense of the practical man is dwarfed by the mental power of the poetical woman. He is too clever to deny her attributes, but his ingenuity, apt at detecting the slightest step towards absurdity, is not capable of conceiving a great idea.

The French count and the Italian poetess are to each other as the spirits of denial and prophecy. Nothing in the whole scope of modern novel-writing is more forcible than Corinne's description of her imprisonment within the small circle of Lady Edgermont's domestic life, an exemplary life which is a model of inanity. An extract may give some idea of the writer's powerful touch, but the whole chapter should be read in order to gain a conception of her true strength.

"Nous vivions assez près du bord de la mer, et le vent du nord se faisait souvent sentir dans notre château : je l'entendais siffler la nuit à travers les longs corridors de notre demeure, et le jour il favorisait merveilleusement notre silence quand nous étions réunies. . . . La naissance, le mariage, et la mort composaient toute l'histoire de notre société, et ces trois événements différaient moins là qu'ailleurs. . . . Je passais quelque fois des jours entiers sans entendre dire un mot qui répondit ni à une idée ni à un sentiment ; l'on ne se permettait pas même des gestes en parlant : on voyait sur le visage des jeunes filles la plus belle fraîcheur, les couleurs les plus vives, et la plus parfaite immobilité ; singulier contraste entre la nature et la société : tous les

ages avaient des plaisirs semblables, et les femmes vieillissaient en faisant toujours la même chose, en restant toujours à la même place. Le temps était bien sur de ne pas les manquer il savait où les prendre. . . . Je sentais mon talent se refroidir, mon esprit se remplissait malgré moi de petites choses. . . . C'est en vain qu'on se dit tel homme n'est pas digne de me juger, telle femme n'est pas capable de me comprendre ; le visage humain exerce un grand pouvoir sur le cœur humain ; et quand vous lisez sur ce visage une désapprobation secrète, elle vous inquiète toujours en dépit de vous même ; enfin le cercle qui vous environne finit toujours par vous cacher le reste du monde ; le plus petit objet placé devant votre œil vous intercepte le soleil. . . . et qui veut être heureux et développer son génie, doit avant tout bien choisir l'atmosphère dont il s'entoure immédiatement."

The dull grey life which is so favourite a theme with modern novelists had then its first and most impressive delineator in Madame de Staël, and the injured and repressed genius fettered by her petticoats, who sighs and groans, or does battle through so many chapters of modern romance, is a great-granddaughter of Corinne, unconscious of her parentage, and in the inheritance of her affliction missing her beauty and her poetry. The philosophical thought abounding in the chapter which has just been quoted has been reproduced in various forms, but it has not elsewhere found such concise and emphatic expression. "Le plus petit objet placé devant votre œil vous intercepte le soleil" ought to have passed into a proverb. Corinne and Delphine were for a time regarded as specimens of somewhat undisciplined feminine passion, but in this line they have been so outstripped by their descendants that they would appear tame and cold to the young ladies who write and read in the present day. Corinne does on one occasion fall down with her forehead against the floor when she hears of the unexpected departure of her lover, but that indulgence of her emotion is known only to the omniscience of the author, and in Lord Nelvil's presence she gives way to no such transports. She neither twines her arms so tightly round him that he is inextricably imprisoned, nor chases him over ploughed fields, nor along

dark lanes, nor smothers him with ever-growing kisses, nor breathes flame by his side, nor does any of those acts of violence which make up the daily life of the interesting young ladies of our modern novels. Corinne and Delphine do not carry things so far; they belong to the emotional, sentimental, passionate school, but the physical was not yet in fashion when they first enlisted sympathy for their trials. They were, however, the pioneers on the road of unrestraint, and began that system of which the author could hardly conceive the completion which we witness in our days. While this subject is present, it may be well to notice one essential point of difference between the art of the French and English novelists of the free school. In the French there is excess in the descriptions of vice: but one virtuous central figure is maintained modest and dignified, and that one is generally the girl of seventeen or nineteen. In the English, the most unlimited manifestations of passion proceed from the girl herself, who is created expressly to charm the young people of good society. Setting the question of morality aside, the repose given by one presence which exalts and sweetens our contemplations is a necessary element of art, and where such an element is wanting, the construction, however clever in detail, fails in strength.

A work of art lives by the harmony of its parts, not by particular passages of power. The "Vicar of Wakefield" has outlived "Corinne," yet "Corinne" gives evidence of far more extensive genius, poetry, and knowledge in the writer: but the author of "Corinne" had a particular purpose in view, and for that purpose concentrated her force upon one idea. The public falls in love with an idea, possesses it, and is satiated: a book like the "Vicar of Wakefield," which only seeks to give a picture of general humanity, and succeeds in making it a resemblance, pleases by its truth and its good proportion, in spite of some carelessness in detail, and suits the men of to-day no less than the men of yesterday, so long as humanity

maintains in the present some general characteristic features establishing its relationship with the past. Novel-writing in England was less immediately affected by Rousseau's genius than in France. It has sucked in some of its constituents gradually, but it has taken them from the later descendants without any contact with the original virus of inoculation: a few works, such as "Sandford and Merton," Mackenzie's "Man of Feeling," and "Julia de Roubigny," with some others of no great significance, appeared as blossoms from the new seed, but the events of the French Revolution from 1789 to '93 alienated the school of freedom from English sympathies, and for a while even the good there was in Rousseau's teaching was cast down by the violence of those who destroyed the cause of liberty while they made spasmodic efforts to advance it.

Miss Burney's immediate successor in popularity was Mrs. Radcliffe. Hannah More's tedious narratives about husbands and wives and their merits and duties had a certain vogue among the ultra-good and serious-minded, but took no real hold on the public: and Mrs. Radcliffe's burst of melodramatic romance was a relief. She took her readers into beautiful scenery, generally in the South of France or Italy; she treated them to many adventures; she gave them mysteries to unravel, and villains to hate, and lovely girls to adore; she gave them sudden frights, and sensations of horror; she took them entirely away from any possible form of actual life. Tight-lacing was the only bad passion that her books encouraged. The mountain maidens, sturdy and robust, extolled by Rousseau, were put down; and a slim creature, preferring bilberries to meat, with a complexion of pink and white, and an inclination to fainting fits, was substituted, and was called "our heroine." She was tender to a fault, but when tried to the utmost was heroic to an excess. She was in weak health, owing to her many shocks and trials, but when pursued by a ruthless and iniquitous count

or marquis, generally spoken of as "The Marchese," *she was fleetier than the fawn*. If her strength suddenly failed her at the end of a long corridor, she would discover a serviceable niche where she would kneel and utter a short prayer, and while in this attitude the Marchese, blinded by the fury of his passion, would pass her by; and she would then be picked up in a deadly swoon by her faithful waiting-maid, who would afterwards retire with her to the inmost recesses of her chamber, where they would discuss together the reason of her persecutions, and the ultimate cause of all the sufferings of humanity: for these heroines, more German than French, are given to metaphysical speculation, and zealously encourage free talk on such subjects in their bright-eyed, quick-tongued attendants, while they majestically silence them with "A truce to your idle babble," if they ever venture a remark upon "*The Marchese*," or "*Our Hero*." Our hero is, however, an inferior personage to our heroine: his chief attributes are his personal beauty and prowess, and his aptitude for being badly wounded at the moment when his appearance in sound health would end the story too abruptly. He is free from all vice, and his innocence prevails over the accusations of his enemies; but it is the innate strength of the heroine which brings about a final triumph, and, after the occasional murder of a father and a brother or two, causes the union of the lovers and their immortal happiness.

The fine feeling of natural beauty, the pleasant descriptions of woods and winding rivers and grand old castles, which are to be found in these romances, are stimulating to the æsthetic taste; while the strain of lofty sentiment throughout, somewhat verbose, yet not without a generous impulse, raises the reader above the region of the mean and commonplace; and these books did no harm beyond inducing in a few sentimentally minded young women an idea that "our hero" was a necessity of life, and that a pursuer of unscrupulous pas-

sion was also a desirable element in the scheme of a feminine existence. The artistic error of Mrs. Radcliffe's productions consists in the bringing the possibilities of mediæval life into modern chronology; otherwise they are well constructed—one part agrees with the other, the characters suit the nature of the plot, the language is in accordance with them, and the background of mountain and forest suits the movement of the narrative. Perhaps they might still be read for the good art that is in them, had not a host of imitators been evoked by them, inferior in quality but surpassing in quantity, who ultimately weighed them down; so that now the originals and the imitations lie confounded together in great heaps at the bottom of the lowest cellars of our circulating libraries.

Jane Austen's novels, level in tone, narrow in their sphere, sensible and quiet in story, strong in satire, may be regarded as a reaction from the Radcliffe school of romance. They were calculated to bring back the attenuated and sentimental to proper nutrition and common sense. The first in order, "*Sense and Sensibility*," had this distinct purpose in it; its more artistic successors showed no direct motive, but the atmosphere of all is the calm and anti-romantic. The way of life of the characters in each narrative is ordinary, but they are handled with such extraordinary skill that they have in them the interest of a life lived in our presence and in that of a keen, right-minded observer, who directs our understanding. A small section of English society is represented perfectly, and nothing is undertaken by the author which is not fulfilled. There are six novels completed by Jane Austen; they are all admirable as works of art, and being so they are equally valuable for all successions of time. By those who prefer the satirical to the passionate and poetic, they are prized as the most perfect specimens of English literature to be found in the form of fiction; but they do not appeal to a wide range of sympathies, and are more esteemed than loved

by readers who seek for an expansion of mind: that is to say, while their perfection upon their own scale is admitted, the want is felt of something beyond to exalt and to stimulate thought—the want of the ideal. If the disciples of the Rousseau, Goethe, and De Staël school are liable by exaggerating the characteristics of their leaders to run into delirium, the imitators of Miss Austen are in danger of dulness, and a large class of daily life, bread-and-butter and teacup novels, which endeavour to resemble her, are unutterably wearisome. Trivial dialogue, vulgar types of character, mean thoughts, and small incidents, abound in these productions. “*Toute imitation est stérile*,” says Victor Hugo; and if his saying is true of every aping of manner, it is never more evidently so than in the attempts occasionally made to be like Jane Austen.

Dull books, distinguished only by their platitudes, are not unfrequently compared to the most excellent examples of the Dutch school of painting; as if, when the great painter had produced an exact image of a glass of beer or of a fish-stall upon his canvas, he had shown all his power; as if no account were to be taken of the delicious atmosphere with which he surrounds his figures, of the light from heaven which he wins to give some divinity to the commonest object, of the poetry of treatment by which he lifts the meanest things up to the region of beauty. This the great masters of the Dutch school do thoroughly, and this Miss Austen did to a considerable extent.

There is a large class of readers in English society so apathetic, so worn down into indifference by dissipation, that they would rather find nothing than much in the pages they turn over; and the existence of such a class is an obstacle, not only in the way of the highest efforts of literature, but of every great endeavour in art. To these another large number must be added, of poorly educated persons, who can read with their eyes but not with their minds, and then it will become evident that a mean, slovenly literature will see the

day, and not want encouragement to grow and prosper, and possibly, as before said, finally to overshadow and smother the good and the beautiful. The distinguished Swedish novelist, Miss Bremer, may be regarded as a cutting from the Austen stem; taking root in a foreign soil, the plant has thrown out new blossoms, new fragrance, and brilliant hues of its own. Genius can never be imitative in the most contracted sense of the word: largely imitative it will always be; it takes a deep impression from every truth that is uttered, and reproduces that utterance newly, more beautifully shaped, till it becomes an eternal eloquence for the universe. The writings of Miss Bremer are distinguished by a spirit of romance mingled with the common details of modern life, and an unconscious simplicity of narrative gives a semblance of truth to her most exciting incidents. Her characters move naturally, and are full of life; they are never overwhelmed with the complexities of their creator's thought; they are generally surrounded by interesting scenery. The pleasure which the reader derives from them is of a beneficial kind, for a genial humanity pervades them all. They are not often now to be found in London drawing-rooms, but they are frequently the only source of imaginative interest permitted to the pent-up school-girl, and a large number of English girls between the ages of thirteen and eighteen have reason to bless the name of the Swedish novelist.

Sir W. Scott's first appearance in prose romance as a writer without a name made a new epoch in the literature of fiction, and before his light, when it shone out in its first intensity, all others paled. He knew how to combine the ideal and the actual as no man had done before. His eye travelled over far space and distant ages. He touched the past, and it woke into life after the slumber of centuries. He called up long processions of glory and beauty; he opened the gates of the palace, thronged with gay retinues—crowned monarchs, proud scarlet cardi-

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nals, women rich in beauty and attire, stately queens and timid maidens. He opened the door of the peasant's hut, where the frugal meal was shared with the stranger, where the children played in rough sport, and the dogs barked a welcome or growled an alarm; with kindly truth he showed the best affections of poverty. He relieved the sorrows of his fiction with breezes from the mountain, the forest, and the sea; he alternated his dark scenes of passion with glimpses of pleasant humour; his extensive reading, shaped by his brilliant fancy, gave him the life of history; his long country rambles, his pauses at way-side inns, his love of field sports, his wanderings over heather and moor with the shepherd and his dog, added to his other varied sources of knowledge the most precious of all, the knowledge of humanity.

There was no direct teaching to be found in his pages; but a spirit of loyalty, of chivalry, of generosity, and of benevolence breathed through them all. He stirred a noble ambition and a sense of beauty; to his historical romance we owe the romantic form of history so prevalent at this time; and perhaps the one is as true as the other. He was the idol of his time. At the present epoch, when the quality is so borne down by the quantity of literary production, no work, however paramount its excellence, can excite so passionate an enthusiasm as that which greeted the first appearance of "Waverley." It became the chief subject of interest throughout all society all over England. Hot disputes arose as to its authorship, and every succeeding volume by the new magician's hand was hailed with still increasing delight. Sir W. Scott's reign was long, and his popularity was undiminished till his death. During the last twenty years it has known fluctuations; and in the first flush of excitement which followed the publication of the works of Charles Dickens, the world forgot the Waverley Novels; but the taste for them is now renewing itself, and they are probably as much read as any works of fiction of the same length

can be read in the strain and stir of our time. Among the actual disciples of Scott's school of romance, the most distinguished are Alfred de Vigny, author of "Cinq Mars;" Alexandre Dumas (the elder), author of almost everything; and Victor Hugo, in his romance of "Notre Dame." His other works have no affinity whatever with Scott's. These works, however, had a distinct originality of their own, and if the scheme of historical fiction which they embraced was suggested by the Waverley romances, the treatment of the subject was unlike. More strange and impossible adventure abounded in Dumas, with more intricacy of plot and more psychological subtlety. There was more enthusiastic sentiment and more epigram in De Vigny; there was a deeper passion, a more fervent imagination, and a more powerful grasp in Victor Hugo. None of these three men could be imitators in the narrow way. Creative genius was in them all. In Victor Hugo its extent was so vast as to convey the idea of the illimitable.

The impulse which Scott's works gave to literature was vivid; the interest they awakened excited all thinking minds to new energy, and prose fiction became so abundant that it is difficult even to take a brief view of the distinguished novelists in England and France who were his contemporaries or his successors. Among Scotchmen, Lockhart, Galt, and Wilson were writers of great power in their different ways. Galt is hardly remembered now; yet in his exactness of detail, in his vigorous conception of human character, in his forcible delineation of the mean and disagreeable, in his perfect mastery over his narrative and the situation it unfolds, he is only equalled by Balzac and George Eliot. The total oblivion into which his genius has fallen must be accounted for by the limited sphere of his observation; he was Scotch, and only Scotch. The dialect of Scotland was the fashion while the author of Waverley's influence was fresh to buoy it up; but when that diminished, the trouble of reading an unfamiliar language made itself felt, and

it increased as the necessity for ease in a public, daily more exercised by demands upon its attention, grew more imperative. There is no other assignable cause for the total disappearance of a strong original writer who was neither exaggerated nor affected in his composition.

The brilliant novels and romances of Disraeli and Lord Lytton belong to no special school. They are unlike each other, and they are still more unlike any of their predecessors. The vividness of Disraeli's fancy is oriental in its character, glowing, prodigal, easy, unrestrained. It assembles objects together as heterogeneous as those which adorn an Eastern bazaar. But they are displayed with considerable art, and under the continual play of a flashing wit, subtle truths are to be found. The reader is transported from the drawing-rooms of London to the deserts of Arabia without the sense of a shock; he listens to the light talk of a fashionable dinner-party in one chapter, and to the poetry of Italy or of Syria in another; the themes of love which link together so much variety of space and action in these novels are of a spiritual nature, tenderly and musically touched, and the different stories are sufficiently removed from any positive family resemblance; but one enthusiasm pervades them almost all: it is a true enthusiasm for the genius of the Hebrew race. A combination of modern life and its passing fashions with a spirit of high romance is the only ground which Disraeli and Lord Lytton hold in common.

Lord Lytton's novels and romances take a wider range than Disraeli's.

From the daring, stinging satires of "Pelham" which first awakened the English public to the recognition of Lord Lytton's genius, to the philosophy and humanity of that charming romance called "My Novel," a long line of imaginative works extends, embracing almost every possible phase of life, past or present—modern political life; stirring historical romance; strange, mystical love stories; the romance of art; the romance of crime. It is useless to continue the enumeration of a variety of

subject which seems to exhaust every form of creation in literature. But through all these different types the hand of the same master is felt, and it would be an inattentive reader who failed to perceive the mind of the author of "Pelham" still, in his more mature conceptions—in "Devereux," in "The Last of the Barons," in "Zanoni," and in "The Caxtons." Lord Lytton's novels and romances are popular through the medium of translations both in France and Germany. They have sympathies with the spirit of both nations, without belonging to either school. Indeed, to speak of a German school in novel-writing would be an error. Goethe, the poet who clasps hands with the first in the universe, has also written the most remarkable works of German prose fiction, founded, as before said, a good deal on the model of Rousseau, but distinctly original productions. Auerbach, happily still living, is the author of some charming romances, amongst which his "Auf der Höhe" stands supreme as a production of singular beauty and complete art; but there are few other German novels worth describing.

Since the date of the publication of "Clarissa Harlowe," in 1748, and that of "Waverley," in 1814, no work of fiction so suddenly roused and rivetted the attention of the English public as "Pickwick," by Charles Dickens, which appeared in the year 1836. Its novelty of subject, the originality with which it represented the humours of its own time, its new phases of character, its fresh fields of observation, its genial, irresistible fun, its touches of genuine pathos and the wide range of sympathies which it embraced, made it the wonder and the delight of every English human being who could read in every class of life. It was published in serial numbers, upon the successive appearance of which, crowds flocked to libraries and bookstalls eager for possession. There was not a house, nor a cottage, nor a remote dwelling in England, where the name of the author of "Pickwick" was not gratefully spoken.

The sick and the poor, and the troubled in heart who had ceased to smile at anything, had an unlooked-for laugh wrung from them. The humour of this original young writer, and the popularity of his work, became a public frenzy, and other literature was sunk for the time in the excitement it produced. Dickens had little to do with drawing-rooms: with almost every other sphere he had active sympathies. He had a sense of fun and what may be termed an exaggeration of perception which could so describe dead things as to make them alive with mirth. A bell-pull at an inn, a worn-out toast-rack, a cover lifted by a waiter, the waiter's expression of countenance, a dog, a fly, the paper of a room, could suggest hidden, strange analogies unthought before, but evidently true when brought out by the master hand. The same hand could show all the strange haunts of London, the ludicrous and the grim aspect of them, the miseries of a prison, the boisterous merriment of a tavern, and the individual characteristics of each man in each company, without any apparent effort. Old London inhabitants seemed to know London for the first time through his descriptions, and for the first time, perhaps, they knew the actual sorrows and struggles of those who lived below the surface of its society. They also saw the good gleaming out of the dark abode, the flashes of fine feeling rising up through the weight of grimy misery or enforced sin; the pen which at every stroke could win a smile, could bring a tear too—a productive, sympathetic tear. The author of "Pickwick," in the long list of popular writings which succeeded to that work, and which are so ably reviewed in Mr. Ferster's biography that further notice of them here would be superfluous, never lost sight of one motive. He continually and forcibly challenged the attention of the opulent to the toiling, suffering, neglected classes of society. He inveighed against oppression, whether in the school of a Squeers or the infirmary of a workhouse, or wherever else he found it, as the cause of human misery. He used his pictu-

resque power to exhibit the better nature in contrast with the evil circumstances. But while he consistently worked for the welfare of humanity, he also consistently abhorred the cant of philanthropy and mock religionism. Some of his most vigorous caricatures were examples of this kind, and are to be found in the characters of the Shepherd, of Pecksniff, of Honeythunder, and a host of others too numerous to name here.

The immortal glory of Dickens is not told by the immediate popularity of his novels, but by their action upon the minds of men in drawing them towards suffering, and pointing out the shame which attaches to the neglect of it. Many reforms, much educational progress, much care for the weak and the poor, have been due to the stir made by his genius; and should it ever happen, as may be sadly foreboded, that his works, with most besides that is admirable in literature, should sink under the rapid accumulation of fresh productions, the effect of what he has done will still remain, still continuing to win from the future new seeds of good. Dickens has also originated types of character which may outlive the stories they appear in. He has been charged with exaggeration as an artist, and not always untruly. But with a picturesque power so remarkable, a grasp of sympathies so large, with perceptions so intense, and so strong a purpose, it is impossible that exaggeration should be altogether avoided. Dickens had an extraordinary vividness of sight. In the grey dulness of a London atmosphere, things showed to him as under the beam of an electric light; and owing to this peculiarity, partly physical, partly acquired, too much detail crowded into his pictures, and too frequent a flash marred some of his effects. The one thing wanting to his genius was repose—not indeed at all times, for there is many a little tender glade and shadowy halting-place in his pages—but, viewing his works as a whole, the abundance of creation burthens the narrative. Some critics have compared Dickens to Balzac because of his power of seeing and describing the

furniture of life. But the two writers have nothing more than a singularly keen sight in common. Balzac was a worker in iniquity; an originator of types of sin; an anatomizer of disease. Dickens looks on such things in order to redeem the beautiful from their soil. Balzac goes into bright scenes to find pollution. He shows the canker in the rose; he exhibits depravity, with little to relieve it. His laugh is a grin; his humour is a satire; with him tenderness is a mask; and the only love he recognizes is passion. His detail both in the objective and subjective is of a marvellous accuracy, and in unflinching power dealing with a scene of utter despair, he is equalled only by Shakespeare. The last scene of "*Le Père Goriot*" is to prose what "*King Lear*" is to poetry. The constant presence of the cruel, the malignant, and the low in Balzac's composition, without the relief of contrasting good, is a blemish in art; but it made his pictures the subjects of a devouring curiosity when they first appeared, and Frenchmen, and, still more, Englishmen, revelled in them as exhibitions of the abnormal and the terrible. They affected French literature considerably for a long period: a taste for the elaborate painting of disease and of ugliness set in as a fashion from the date of the publication of Balzac's first acknowledged novel, called "*La Peau de Chagrin*," and it survives still; survives the death of the author, and survives the decay of his works in popularity. So long as the literature of the past holds together, Balzac's works will be admired by all critics for their skill, their force, and their passion, but the exaggerated leaning to vice, the too constant use of the dissecting knife which forced them upon general attention while they were new, begins to weary now, and a satiated public turns to seek something more alluring. At the present day, Balzac's novels are read with more avidity in England than in France, and in England their effect in inducing a taste for the revolting may also be traced throughout the region of creative art.

The later novels and romances of George Sand (unhappily the early ones are unreadable) have a counteracting influence. They dwell on the beautiful in art and nature; they embrace all the most charming scenery of the world; they bring air and light from heaven; they are full of the richest harmonies of music; life in them is roving and adventurous; they exhibit infinite diversity of character; they show examples of unaffected goodness and strength in woman, of generosity and honesty in men; they are full of poetry and full of life; and the style in which the narratives are told is the perfection of the French language—a language which has gone on gaining freedom, and the beauty of freedom, since the date of Rousseau's first bursts of eloquence, and which has found its most powerful master in the genius of Victor Hugo. "*Les Misérables*" is the greatest prose vocabulary of that great poet. His copious vocabulary disdains the limits of the dictionary; where he wills to tread he makes his own road; with his huge axe he cuts his way before him, and climbs to his summit. Classical Frenchmen shake their heads at "*Les Misérables*," and say it is a great work, but it is not written in French. It has helped to make French: the language which a century ago was meagre, is full now, and yields harmonies to the poets which they dared not touch before. Victor Hugo's "*Misérables*" is more like a grand epic than a novel or a romance. It takes a large survey of human life; it strikes every chord of pity for misery and pain; it rouses every sympathy for the noble; it exhibits the austere, the cruel, the humorous, the beautiful, side by side; it drags the light of virtue out of sunless places; it follows vice to its most wretched haunt; it exhibits woman in her purity and in her degradation; it holds up a type of almost divine perfection in a priest and in a convict. It leaves few subjects untouched, and in every touch there is interest. Hugo's subsequent prose works have been inferior to "*Les Misérables*," and it is not possible that he will ever surpass it. It

cannot be spoken of merely with reference to its own time; it is the result of all time, and does not address itself to the special taste of any single epoch.

The poet looks to all ages: the satirist directs his force more immediately upon his own day. There are satires, however, such as those contained in the brilliant novels of Peacock, which lash mankind all round, everywhere; not concerning themselves with the follies of fashion, but with the general weaknesses or eccentricities of humanity. Peacock dealt mostly with its eccentricities. He was a complete master of English: he cut deep. Mixed with his serious satire there was a wild flow of humour, jovial as that of Rabelais, and mixed with his humour there was a classical lore always showing itself, not pedantically, but naturally, because the author could not help it. Over the whole a musical grace is dominant, and the songs with which the narratives are interspersed are among the most exquisite in the English language. "Maid Marian" is the best known of Peacock's novels; but "Headlong Hall," "Nightmare Abbey," "Crotchet Castle," "The Misfortunes of Elfin," and "Gryll Grange," are not less excellent as works of art. Peacock was a contemporary of Charles Lamb, and the literature of his period was elaborate and thoughtful, and bore the stamp of cultivation and care—too much perhaps for the general reader of the present day; but men who care to think and to linger over beauty turn to it still with delight.

The writings of Thackeray were more special in their satire than Peacock's. Thackeray dealt chiefly with the frivolities, the vanities, the petty jealousies and miserable aims and ends, heart-burnings, and frauds of fashionable life. His "Vanity Fair" is a painful exposure of such a mode of existence. He has the strength of Le Sage. His style is easy and finished, and he has the true

art which looks like simplicity. He has occasional touches of generosity and tenderness which relieve the bitterness of his sarcasm; and in some of his novels, especially in "Esmond" and in "The Virginians," he leaves the stifling atmosphere of London drawing-rooms for freer air and more imaginative regions. All the good that satire can do must have been done by his works. As a satirist he has not been surpassed, and as a writer of English he should be read as a perfect model. He is unhappily to be counted now as a writer of the past—cut off, as Charles Dickens also was, in the fulness of his power. He has left in his gifted daughter a successor worthy of his name; but those who are continuing to produce fresh blossoms among us are not to be criticized in these pages, and for this reason the beautiful and powerful productions of George Eliot, and the admirable novels of Anthony Trollope, with many other works of genius, have not been mentioned.

The field of American prose fiction is too extensive for surveying here at present, and must be reserved for a future occasion. Yet, before closing this paper, it may be well to call attention to the remarkable American novel called "Uncle Tom's Cabin," as a work which made an extraordinary sensation at the date of its publication, being written with the avowed object of putting down slavery. The narrative was forcible and pathetic, and roused the ladies of England into vehement anti-slavery demonstrations. It stirred the American mind no less.

Slavery in America is abolished now, owing to a concurrence of circumstance and of thought, to which thought "Uncle Tom" without doubt added some animation; but the novel has ceased to be popular, annihilated by the exaggerations which in almost all cases attach themselves to the novelist who writes with a direct mission.

JULIET POLLOCK.

EAST EUROPE.

RAILWAYS are rapidly invading the border provinces of Eastern Europe, carrying by assault the few strongholds of Old-World traditions, customs, and costumes that civilization has hitherto spared, and lessening the happiness of comparatively unsophisticated populations, by increasing what is erroneously called their prosperity—as if augmenting the number of a man's wants, by suddenly and unnaturally adding to his means, were in reality contributing to the increment of his felicity! In a few years even the picturesqueness of the East-European peoples will have disappeared, as have already their frugality, truthfulness, and love of labour. Throughout Hungary, the Banat, Transylvania, and the two Rouman Principalities, the bourgeoisie has exchanged its national costume for the dress which is common to the middle classes of Central and Western Europe. The hideous, oppressive, and prosaic chimney-pot hat has replaced the romantic and comfortable *schirák* and *kuczma*; the shooting-jacket has ousted the *attila* and *halena*; trousers, which rob every leg they clothe of its individuality, conceal the symmetry of many a sturdy limb which the *naschrag*, with the aid of a trim stocking and a few metal buttons, would set off agreeably. With the women it is still worse; especially if we go one step down the social ladder, and consider the peasantry. Bright colours are fading out of their petticoats and bodices; they are coming, in the matter of raiment, to that dismal blue complexion that afflicts the bronze plough-woman, husband-wife, reaperess, and female slave to the soil in general, of Italy, Germany, Austria, and France. The "civilizing" railway brings them this stuff of livid hue (its intrinsic

hideousness frequently exaggerated by the superimposition of countless white spots, peculiarly distressing to the eye) in such enormous quantities, and at prices so moderate, that they are virtually compelled to take to it; and the gay scarlets and greens, purples and yellows, are doomed to play a subordinate part (and that only of a Sunday) where formerly they reigned paramount.

One of the immediate and inevitable results of the penetration by a railway of any country hitherto self-supporting in the way of edible and potable products, and dependent upon post-road, river, and canal locomotive facilities for its clothing, implements, and luxuries of all sorts, is that in the neighbourhood of the new line wages rise, luxuries become comparatively cheap, and necessities positively dear. That his wife can purchase pomatum at sixpence instead of ninepence a pot, does not compensate the labouring man for the injury he sustains by an advance in the prices of bread, meat, and wine, and by the raising of his rent; which changes in the conditions of his existence accompany, if they do not by a little precede, the raising of his own wages if he be merely another man's servant, or the improvement in the marketable value of whatever commodity he produces if he be an exploiter of land, labour, or skill on his own account. And with increased means (for human nature will not have it otherwise) come expenditure disproportionate to the increment suggesting it; ambition to appear something more than he is, or at least than his neighbour is; discontent with his lot; and several other heralds of civilization, gaudily garbed as heralds should be, and blowing their trumpets with such vigour that one cannot choose but hear; but, to a discriminating ear, the blaze

of those trumpets is a sound rather of menace than of joyful announcement.

Up to the year 1867 the Principalities, in the very teeth of their manifest destiny, preserved their immunity from the inroads of the steam-horse. As much ingenuity, indeed, was expended to prevent railways from crossing the Rouman frontier as if they had been armies of occupation, or, worse still, Effendim belonging to the Turkish Treasury Department, on special mission to demand payment of tribute to the Padishah—that tribute which his great Danubian vassals are so strangely forgetful to hand over annually, or indeed at any time, to their lord. Circassia had a railway of her own, part of the African Desert was intersected by an iron road, ere Roumania, a country lying right across one of the thoroughfares to the East, could boast of a single mile of rails. Serbia, through which another of those natural highways should penetrate, has not even yet fully complied with the requirements of the age. She is reluctantly building her railways, but not with her own money; and, but that needy men wield the power of the State during Milano's minority, to whom the pickings of concessions have proved temptations irresistible, it may be doubted whether the haughty pig-breeders and distillers who make up the Skupchina, or Legislative Body, would of themselves have consented to forego the isolation of Serbia, hitherto virtually absolute, surrounded though she is by countries closely akin to her through the race, speech, and religion of their inhabitants; an isolation brought about by the fierce temper and rigorous frugality of this hardy Slavonic tribe, which, having been for centuries subjected to terrible oppression, has rid itself of, but never forgiven, its oppressors—and has conceived a dislike towards all its neighbours, having been in times past successively the victim of one and another, actively or passively its foes. A country that has served as the battle-ground upon which mighty powers have chosen to fight out their quarrels à plusieurs reprises cannot be

expected to entertain lively affections for those who have, in dismal alternation, destroyed its crops, devoured its live stock, and burnt its villages! Besides, the Serbs have been hardened by ages of extreme poverty, the result of tributes without number, arbitrarily demanded and collected by means of fire and sword, to a simplicity of habits and paucity of wants that render them scornfully indifferent to the advantages promised them to accrue from the "opening up" of their grim little Fatherland by railway communication. They produce nearly everything that they require within its limits, roughly fabricated enough, coarse in material and wanting in finish; and they have hitherto experienced no ambition to supply themselves with better articles from abroad; whilst luxury is unknown, even in the houses of the wealthiest men. Bribes judiciously administered to those few of their leading functionaries who, having been educated abroad, have contracted tastes and developed faculties of enjoyment which their slender patrimonies and more slender official salaries by no means permit them to gratify, have vanquished the reluctance which Serbia has consistently manifested, ever since her vassaldom became a merely nominal one, to coming into that league of Eastern civilization of which Austria has been the sincere and Russia the pretended propagandist for more than a hundred years past.

Of a totally different nature were the obstacles that for more than a lustum delayed the admission of Roumania into the Bradshaw Confederation. Somehow or other the great capitalists of Europe, into whose hands, either directly or through the financial companies they have created and still sway, all enterprises of any sensible magnitude are committed, failed to repose that implicit confidence in the integrity of Rouman Governments, whether of the fiery red or true-blue colour, that would have justified them in risking their millions upon the faith of a Moldo-Wallachian State guarantee. Whilst John Alexander Couza, the betting Boyard of

Galatz, sat upon the Hospodarial *pouf* of the twin Principalities (the union of which into one realm he was mainly instrumental in effecting), the 'Changes of Vienna, Frankfort, and Berlin entertained an unfavourable opinion of the country's solvability, as well as of its honesty; and that there was a solid foundation for what the glib Boyard himself used to deprecate as a cruel and groundless prejudice, may be fairly assumed upon evidence that was produced by the Triumvirate, immediately after Couza's abdication had been wrung from him by a *coup de main*. One out of a dozen startling facts that then came to light will serve to justify in some degree the distrust above alluded to. When, having transferred their ex-Hospodar in the early morn to Kotrocheni, on his way to the frontier, Messrs. Ghika, Catargiu, and Mavrogeni proceeded to take stock of the Public Treasury's contents, they found, in bullion, twelve ducats (about £5 14s.), the only sum immediately available wherewith to carry on the business of administrating the nation's affairs. Inquiry into the state of matters at the different State departments led to the still more astonishing revelation that the army, for the maintenance of which the taxes had not only been repeatedly raised, but had actually been collected, to the painful surprise and discomfiture of the newly emancipate peasantry, had not received any pay for several months, and that the utter impecuniosity of the State had left its defenders in such straits that to the horses of the two cavalry regiments then garrisoning Bucharest no fodder of any kind had been served out for the twenty-four hours preceding Couza's seizure. But for these legitimate causes of discontent, it may be parenthetically observed, the army, to which Couza had been prodigal of favours, would have probably remained faithful to him in spite of all his shortcomings; and as it was, nothing but the almost starving condition of their horses prevented his spoil children, the Lancers, from starting to rescue him from Colonel Pilat, Major Leko, and

their myrmidons, as soon as it came to the knowledge of that crack regiment that its patron and commander had been basely kidnapped in the dead of the night, by men whom he had raised from social obscurity to high military rank. Empty hayracks assuredly averted the jovial and astute Prince's recapture; luckily, perhaps, for him, as his betrayers had bound themselves by an oath to take his life if they should find themselves to be pursued by an armed force superior to their own. The empty Treasury presented a difficulty to be dealt with by the Triumvirate. It was only after it had been temporarily replenished that men set themselves seriously to consider what had become of the money; and the financiers, upon whose entertainment State guarantees for the construction and cost of Roumanian railways had been ardently urged by agent after agent of his Highness's Government, received the congratulations of their friends for their prudence and sagacity.

Since the good-looking youth who carried Bratiano's carpet-bag ashore from the "*accélére*" steamer at Giurgevo, in the early autumn of 1866, has ruled the roost at Bucuresci, the distrustfulness of contractors and bankers anent the value of Roumanian State responsibility, which they formerly were averse to discount on the most tempting terms, has become materially allayed. It was felt that not only did Prince Carol not stand alone, but that his backers were of the strongest. Having planted him out on "Vorposten" duty at such a distance from the main body of his comrades, the great political captain of the age, it was assumed (who never does anything by halves), would certainly not fail to support him when it might be needful, and would not, unless compelled thereto by some enormous exigency, abandon him so long as he carried out his instructions and behaved himself decently. The Pickelhaube and Zundnadelgewehr were, rightly or wrongly, deemed to be sustainers *in posse* of Carol I., *quoad* his subjects, should the latter turn out recalcitrant or even troublesome; and

it was not unnatural that a well-grounded faith in the irresistibility of these Teutonic institutions should have prompted the Germans to take the initiative in devoting their spare cash to the development of enterprises the genuineness of which appeared to them to be guaranteed by Krupp and Dreyse. Dacian railway shares found a ready, nay, an eager market in the 'Changes of the Fatherland'; a financial genius of the first rank amongst latter-day speculators was the *concessionnaire* of the more important lines. His luck, become a proverb amongst his countrymen, imparted itself for a while to Roumanian railway stock; money flowed into the Principalities; armies of Polish, Slovak, and Wendish labourers were transported, under German leaderships, to the Trans-Carpathian provinces, and in a leash of years the capital of Roumania was linked to its chief provincial cities and commercial *emporia* by iron roads of serviceable if not excellent quality.

Dacia, therefore, is undergoing at last that process of transformation, conventionally called civilization, in which railway communication plays so leading a part. That little obscure corner of Europe, known to a limited class of commercial Englishmen as a practically inexhaustible granary, and to the general public as a sort of No-man's Land, liable to be "occupied" at any moment by Russian, Turkish, or Austrian armies—in which, even now, the *fanatico pell'* 'antichita' may contemplate thousands of humble, contented, ignorant, picturesque people, who live, dress, and speak in much the same manner as their ancestors did eighteen hundred years ago—has been annexed by £ s. d., brought to its bearings by a dumpy level, and enregistered in the columns of a timetable. How long will the descendants of Trajan's legionaries preserve the individuality which an isolation that dates from the commencement of the Christian era has enabled them to maintain intact until now? The lofty stature, dignified carriage, aquiline nose, and sweet, sonorous tongue may endure for a few gene-

rations to come, until the incursions of Slavish and Teutonic settlers shall have crossed the breed out of knowledge; but how long will the flowing toga of skins, the furred bonnet, the leather buskin and sandal, girdle and sash, hold their own against cheap Manchester cottons, French and Belgian cloths, and rubbishing German "dry goods"? Galatz, Buzeu, Roman, Ibraila, are railway stations! Who, in English middle-class society, even knew where those places were situate some half-dozen years ago? In the autumn of 1865 it happened to the writer of these lines to be sent on a special mission to the Principalities. On his way to the capital of Roumania, he had been ordered to convey some despatches of importance to the hands of an exalted personage then in Galatz; and this fact he happened to mention, in course of conversation, to a well-known M.P. whom he met accidentally at dinner on the eve of his departure. "Rather hot, still, for Spain, is it not? However, I congratulate you, for it is a most interesting country," was the legislator's kindly comment upon the communication. Just before the Austro-Prussian war broke out, an English corn merchant, having established a branch house on the Lower Danube, and invested a little more capital than he could conveniently spare from his regular business in a small fleet of iron barges and steamtugs for the conveyance of grain from store depôts at various stations on the river to the loading places near its mouth (a highly remunerative carrying trade), sought to *revenir dans son argent* by handing his *schlepps*, &c., over to a company in the manner with which the last decade has made every owner of any marketable property so agreeably familiar. He prepared a glowing though truthful prospectus, and took it to an eminent financier, anxious to secure his name for the list of directors and his good word for the enterprise, which was all but launched. After reading the prospectus carefully, and listening with polite attention to the further explanations by which Mr. ——— endeavoured to

render the scheme irresistibly attractive, the man of millions observed : "Capital prospectus ! Most excellent project, I am sure, Mr. ——. All very clear and unmistakable—except one thing—*Where is the Danube ?*"

It is given but to few to be accurately informed respecting men, events, and localities ; indeed, accuracy is probably the rarest attribute of modern society. We know so much about everything, that we are incapable of correctness with regard to any one particular fact. The British member, renowned for his acquaintance with foreign politics, and regularly put up by his party to speak upon the Eastern Question, who, being abruptly challenged by an old continental loungeur to point out Belgrade on the map, without hesitation boldly thrust his finger into the centre of East Prussia, —the French Secretary of Embassy in Vienna (now a *Chargé d'Affaires* representing the Republic in a southern clime), who, hearing the King of Würtemberg mentioned in a political discussion during the 1866 war, unaffectedly exclaimed, "*Le Roi de Würtemberg ! Qu'est ce que c'est que cela ?*"—were by no means out-of-the-way examples of the slip-sloppiness with which men get up what they suppose to be knowledge upon subjects having direct and essential bearing upon the occupations of their lives. It is not to be expected, of course, that all people of average education and intelligence, putting British legislators and foreign diplomatists out of the question, should know "all about the Danube" and its ripal territories, although it is the largest European river, and although it will be about the title to those countries on its either bank that the next great struggle for supremacy in the old world will probably be fought out. But it is a curious example of carelessness, as manifested by persons whose special business it is to be accurate, and at whose disposal are placed copious and exceptional sources of information, that the leading journals of Europe and the great telegraphic agencies, when they deal with the Danubian Principalities, almost in-

variably misspell the names of towns and of men, Rouman or Slavonic, which should be "household words" in their respective offices ; and, oddly enough, persist in misspelling them in a particular way, with a painstaking in the repetition of error that might just as well be bestowed upon the achievement of correctness. For instance, the thriving town of Buzeu, half-way between Bucuresci (commonly misnamed Bucharest) and Braila, at which, in the posting days now relegated to the limbo of tradition, every traveller between the Wallachian capital and the great Roumanian ports was fain to pass the night—a circumstance which, owing to the peculiarly loathsome accommodation provided by the owners of the two highly lepidopterous *krisme* (inns) constituting the entertainment resources of the town, must have ineradicably impressed the name of Buzeu upon the memories of all those who have visited it—is almost without exception spelt "Busen" in the telegraphic columns of English, French, German, and Italian newspapers. No matter that it is now an important station, at which there is a *buffet* and twenty minutes' "interval for refreshment." The other day, when it was the scene of a riot, in which the Jews were hunted down by their debtors, according to the pleasant custom of the country, members mentioning it in the House, philanthropists sending round the hat for subscriptions wherewith to comfort the harried Israelites (there is a good deal to be said, by the way, on the other side of that question), and newspapers printing indignation leaders on the barbarism of these "Oriental Christians," all were unanimous in the use of the "Busen" version.

Roumania, however, now that access to her cities has been rendered easy, and that a practicable short cut to Stamboul has been driven transversely through both her Principalities, must soon emerge from the obscurity in which, with occasional flashes of notoriety, she has been content to grovel for as many centuries as go to make up the annals of Christianity. Well for her had

she never emerged from that blissful state of comparative insignificance which leaves long blanks of real prosperity in the history of a nation! But for the covetousness of her neighbours, periodically aroused by the intrinsic value of her products and the almost marvellous fertility of her soil, her archives had resembled the diary of a child—most trustworthy record of happiness by reason of its dearth of incident. But for the mutual jealousies of those powerful and martial neighbours, she had long since been definitely annexed by one or other of them, and forcibly despoiled of the humble and inoffensive but romantic individuality which she has preserved so long, only to resign it with good grace at the behest of "civilization." It may be hoped that at some future time civilization will reward her sacrifice by condescending to observe the rules of orthography when describing the Locomotive's latest conquest.

A conquest, indeed, of which the Steam Genius and his mighty familiar, Capital, may be justly proud! Roumania is the Canaan of Europe, veritably overflowing with milk and honey, and many other natural products far more valuable and even more nutritious than those *summa bona* of Mosaic "prospecting." Filled with rude implements, the pattern and make of which have suffered scarcely any alteration since Virgil wrote his "Georgics," the soil of its plains will bring forth year after year crops of maize that overtop the pennon of an Uhlan's spear as he sits on his charger with ordered lance. Its vines are laden in the early autumn with large clusters of grapes, five and six pounds being no uncommon weight to be attained by the finer bunches. Its hares and partridges are nearly as large again and of a more delicate flavour than those indigenous to England and France. The average weight of a full-grown young hare in Moldavia is 12 lb.; and the writer has more than once had the good fortune to include an overgrown adult of over 15 lbs. in his day's bag. To the lovers of large and combative game the

Carpathians offer good store of bears (not mild little honey gluttons like the Pyrenean bruin, but good, strong, ferocious fellows, who would a good deal rather rend you than not), wild boars, the largest and fiercest of their kind in Europe, and wild cats with sanguinary proclivities. Wolves abound all over both Principalities, to which several varieties of deer are also native. Bustard by hundreds, quail by thousands, frequent the enormous maize fields; the rivers and lakes swarm with fish (Danube is famous for his sturgeon); there is buffalo in plenty on the river islands; and all sorts of fancy shooting in the way of pelican, condor, white-headed eagle, and water-fowl. Some of the white wines are equal in every respect to the finest growths of Bordeaux and Burgundy; and, but a few years ago, Odobesti and other famous brands, for which, labelled "Chateau Yquem" or "Montrachet," no connoisseur would grudge twenty francs a bottle at Bignon's or Vachette's, could be purchased in any decent country kriska on the high road, for about three piastres, or eight-pence a bottle. Already its price has more than doubled, and as soon as it becomes known abroad it will compete with and probably fetch more money than the Bakators and Nesmelyers of Magyarland. Civilization will leave the Roumans but little of it for home consumption, and will give them as a substitute bad beer or worse spirits.

Bucuresel is bidding fair to rival Vienna and Berlin in dearth of living; indeed, it would appear that the leading restaurants of the Podo Mogosoi are running Sacher's and Hiller's, or even the Boulevard Cafés Restaurateurs of Paris, hard in the matter of extravagant charges. House-rents have risen in Galatz, Braila, and even Jassy; the fine mansion that Couza the Boyard gambled away at *baccarat*, and in which the business of the Galatz Bourse is daily transacted, has attained a value that must cause his ex-Highness's bosom to heave with many a sigh of fruitless regret as he thinks of the com-

paratively trifling stake against which he set, and lost it on the strength of a seven and a two. Horses and cattle, though still cheaper than in Western Europe, have undergone an extraordinary advance in value. A pair of strong, sound, and fast ponies could be bought in Wallachia seven years ago for eight ducats (about 3*l.* 16*s.*) Their price now would be from 30*l.* to 40*l.* In the winter of 1866, an exceptionally severe one, during which fodder was scarce and dear, the peasants offered their live stock at fabulously low prices, and many a cow, with her calf by her side, went begging at two yermalicks, or 8*s.* 3*d.* This year ten or twelve times that amount might be bid for a heifer in vain throughout the Danubian Delta. Good tobacco costs a guinea a pound in Bucuresci; even the rachin (raki, a sweet spirit distilled from grain), of which, within the last ten years, a quantity sufficient to intoxicate a rhinoceros could be procured for two-pence, has kept pace with the general rise, and is by way of classing itself among the liqueurs, at least as regards its price.

Roumania was never the abode of the virtues; but her immoralities, until lately, were of the patriarchal sort, naïvely committed and naïvely tolerated. Now they are becoming as vulgar and sordid as the vices of highly-civilized countries. She has got a national debt, as befits a rising and ambitious country; she has got a standing army, for which she has not the least occasion, and which costs her *les yeux de la tête*; she has made strenuous efforts to provide herself with a navy, despite the fact that Nature has omitted to endow her with a single yard of sea-board—indeed, she got once as far as nominating two admirals and fitting out a war-steamer on the Danube, which might have remained a floating menace to Europe up to the present moment but for having been deftly run down on its first cruise by an Austrian passenger-boat; and now she has got hereditary monarchy, the right of coining moneys, and, finally, railways in considerable profusion. Even to parliamentary institutions, she possesses every attribute of “civilization.” “And yet,” as Mr. Toole would say, “she is not happy!”

WM. BEATTY KINGSTON.

OUR COAL SUPPLY.

The subject of the quantity and duration of our supply of coal can scarcely be said to have become a public question till the debates on the Commercial Treaty with France in 1860. Long before that, however, the possibility of the exhaustion, at a not very remote date, of our mineral treasures, had engaged the attention of scientific men. In 1842, Dr. Buckland successfully urged upon Sir Robert Peel the wisdom of imposing a duty upon the export of a commodity which, when destroyed, could not be replaced. The repeal of this duty in pursuance of the Treaty, and the anticipated increase in the consumption of coal, provoked a discussion which served to popularize a subject the consideration of which had been hitherto restricted to learned societies and professional men. When *Punch* depicted John Bull receiving from the French Emperor a bottle of light wine and handing him in exchange a scuttleful of black diamonds, with a countenance in which neighbourly regard was mingled with the apprehension of having made a bad bargain, the caricature expressed fairly enough a latent feeling of uneasiness as to the prudence of yet further augmenting the consumption of an invaluable commodity. In 1861, Professor Hull published his "Coalfields of Great Britain," in which he made an estimate of the resources of the British coalfields, based on the researches of the Geological Survey of which he was himself a member. In 1863, Sir W. Armstrong, in his opening address to the British Association, referred at length to the coal supply of this country, the future of which was, he said, a matter of no little anxiety. In 1866, the publication of Professor Jevons' computation that in three generations all the coal lying at a less depth

than four thousand feet would be exhausted, invested the subject with still more importance. Mr. Mill quoted Mr. Jevons' conclusions in a debate on the Malt Tax, and, in a speech whose only fault was its brevity, enlarged upon the necessity of diminishing the national liabilities at once, instead of leaving them, unreduced, to a posterity which may be but ill able to discharge them, because deprived of the most important factor in production. Mr. Gladstone, when introducing the budget of 1866, adopted a similar line of reasoning, and made the coal question the argument for a scheme for extending the operation of terminable annuities. But meanwhile, no further effort than that of Mr. Hull had been made to ascertain, in a comprehensive and accurate manner, the actual quantity of coal still unwrought in the country. At length, in June 1866, Mr. Hussey Vivian, the member for Glamorganshire, brought the subject before the House of Commons. In a speech of great ability, he questioned Mr. Hull's and Mr. Jevons' estimates, made light of the difficulties attendant on greater depth of working and on better ventilation, and concluded by moving for a Royal Commission, rather with the view of allaying public anxiety than because he shared at all in the frequent rumours of coming exhaustion. The motion was agreed to, and a Commission, consisting of some of the most eminent geologists and mining engineers of the present day, and with the Duke of Argyll as chairman, was constituted in June 1866. On the 27th of July 1871, the Commission presented its general report, based upon twenty-two sub-reports, the work during five years of five committees and twenty special commissioners. The labours of the Commission occupy in all three

volumes, of which only the first, containing the general and sub-reports, is at present published. By means of these, we hope to lay before our readers materials for the reply to the momentous question, How long will our coal last?

At the outset the subject divides itself into two main branches, viz. the quantity of coal still remaining in our known coalfields, and the probability or otherwise of the existence of new fields, hitherto hidden under newer strata. As our readers are aware, the coal-measures of England rest on a stratum of coarse sandstone, known as Millstone Grit, which itself reposes on the great calcareous deposit, the Carboniferous Limestone. Above the coal-measures have been deposited the Permian rocks, consisting of sandstones, dolomitic conglomerate, and magnesian limestone. The Permian is the highest of the Primary or Palæozoic rocks. Above these come the Secondary rocks, embracing the Trias and Lias series, and higher still the Tertiary or modern deposits. Now, during the tremendous convulsions which the Palæozoic strata underwent after the formation of the coal-measures and before the deposit of the Secondary strata, the older rocks were in many cases crumpled up into hills. Then denudation followed, and the newer rocks were deposited horizontally, completely levelling the smaller elevations, but thinning out as they approached the highest eminences. One such convulsion evidently operated in a direction from the south of Ireland along the coast of Wales, on to Frome, and resulted in the uplifting of the Mendip Hills. A similar disturbance elevated the Ardennes. By attention to such physical phenomena as these, and by comparison of the effects produced thereby in one locality with those observable in another, discoveries of the greatest practical value are made. So in the case before us. The known coalfields of Great Britain are, with scarcely an exception, limited to areas within which the coal-bearing strata lie at the

surface, or have been traced under overlying strata by the test of mining operations. But geology by no means admits that these are our only coalfields. She looks beneath the superincumbent formations, and points to large beds of coal under the new red sandstone and Permian rocks in many of the counties in which the existing fields are situated. Thus the latter become, as it has been expressed, "the black fringes of the great red shawl" which conceals virgin stores of mineral wealth. An effort has been made, by a committee of eminent geologists appointed by the Coal Commission, to determine the probable extent and productiveness of these coalfields, and the result arrived at is that, in a variety of districts extending from the valley of the Severn, through the midland counties, beds of coal of over 2,000 square miles in area, and containing upwards of 56,000,000,000 tons, exist under the Permian and sandstone deposits. To the same Committee also was referred the still more interesting and important question of the existence of coal in the south of England. As our readers are doubtless aware, south of a line drawn from Bath to Stamford and Yarmouth, no true coal has yet been found, the whole area being occupied by strata newer than the coal-measures. But even so long ago as 1826, geologists were struck with the resemblance existing between the coalfields of the Meuse and those of the south-west of England. Beyond Valenciennes, the Belgian coalfield was supposed to be lost under the cretaceous deposits, but the discovery subsequently of coal-measures within thirty miles of Calais led to the conclusion that they are prolonged under the chalk in a line with the Thames valley, and so extend to the Bath and Bristol fields. According to this view, which was elaborated by Mr. Godwin-Austen in 1855, the coal-measures of a large portion of England, France, and Belgium were once continuous, until broken up by the great disturbance which tilted up the coal strata to the surface, and formed the

anticlinals of the Ardennes and of South Wales. Now, as the axis of this upheave is accompanied in Belgium and France with the existence of a coal-trough within a workable depth, why may not that trough be continued through the south of England? To the question thus put, Sir Roderick Murchison replies that little coal could be expected to remain under the cretaceous rocks, in consequence of the denudation of the carboniferous rocks previously to the deposition of the Secondary rocks. These are the fundamental points of the subject, which has now been thoroughly investigated by Mr. Prestwich, who substantially endorses the views of Mr. Godwin-Austen, and contends for the existence of a large area of productive coal-measures under the Secondary strata of the south of England. At all events "a few trials for coals," says Mr. Prestwich, "would not be very costly, and could hardly fail in important results, as, in case of failing at once to hit the coal-measures, we might possibly find the Lower Greensands, and thus solve one or other of the great questions—of discovering the productive coal strata of the Somerset and Belgian band, or of obtaining the pure and abundant waters of the Lower Greensands; both considerations of high importance for the metropolis."

In any investigations as to the quantity of coal still remaining in our mines, one consideration of the highest importance is presented: What is the lowest depth at which mining operations can be carried on?—in other words, How much of the total supply of each mine must be omitted from our estimate of available coal, because of the practical impossibility of working it? Now, the difficulties to be encountered in deep mining are of two classes—those of a mechanical nature, and those which are occasioned by the great increase of temperature. The former are by no means insuperable. The cost of steam power for shaft-sinking and coal-hoisting does not greatly increase with the increase of depth, while the use of steel wire ropes

tapering downwards, and the adoption of stages in the shaft, renders it practicable to draw coal from extreme depths. Undoubtedly, the augmented firmness of the strata would make the labour of excavation arduous, but neither in this particular nor in the liability to explosion are there any insurmountable obstacles to deep working. With the latter class, however, the case is very different. The heat of a mine is a foe whose animosity can be but slightly conciliated by human device. To a great extent his opposition must be endured; and it becomes, therefore, of primary importance to ascertain the highest temperature at which healthy labour can be performed. The capacity of the human frame to support heat is, in some cases, almost incredible. Dr. Carpenter mentions that the workmen of the late Sir F. Chantrey were accustomed to enter a furnace in which his moulds were dried, while the floor was red-hot, and the thermometer in the air stood at 350 deg.; while Chabert, the Fire King, was in the habit of entering an oven at a temperature of from 400 to 600 deg. These are, undoubtedly, very extreme cases, even if they be not exaggerated, but it is abundantly clear that workmen in iron-foundries, glass-houses, and gasworks do habitually labour in a temperature which is absolutely intolerable to the occasional visitor. From the voluminous testimony which the Commissioners have collected on this subject, we find that glass-blowers work without serious detriment to health in 180 deg. Fahr.; while Mr. Deden, of the Jernyn-street Turkish Baths, states that the attendants there work constantly in a temperature of 120 deg. Fahr. In both cases, however, relief is frequently obtained by the men employed—the glass-blowers resorting at intervals to the external air, while the employés at the Turkish Bath have the opportunity of applying cold water to their bodies.

It is important to bear in mind that these high temperatures are chiefly dry air temperatures. The body can, of

course, endure a much higher degree of heat in dry air than in moist. Perspiration cools simply by promoting evaporation, and evaporation cannot take place with sufficient rapidity in an atmosphere charged with humidity. Hence the feeling of oppression experienced by most people in hot, damp weather. Now, the air in a mine is generally moist as well as hot, in consequence of the existence of hot-water springs. Thus, in a series of hygrometric observations in coal mines in Lancashire, &c., the temperature of which varied from 60 to 81 deg., the average humidity in relation to saturation was as 88 to 100; while in the shampooing chamber of the Jermyn-street Turkish Bath, where the dry bulb ranged from 112 to 114 deg., the average humidity was only as 33 to 100, showing a degree of dryness far in excess of that in coal mines. In consequence, therefore, of this moisture of the atmosphere, and of the severe conditions under which mining is performed—the dislodging of the coal requiring great exertion, frequently in a constrained posture and in comparative darkness—the same degree of heat which would be sustained with little or no inconvenience in a Turkish bath or glass-house would be simply intolerable in a mine. In a Cornish mine, where the air is heated by a hot spring to 117 deg. and saturated with moisture, it is found impossible for the miners to work more than three hours in the twenty-four, or for more than from ten to fifteen minutes at a time. At the expiration of each short spell of labour, the miner goes to the cooler part of the excavation to rest. “At that moment he is,” to quote Dr. Sanderson’s words, “no longer capable of exertion. Perspiration pours from his body, his heart and arteries pulsate visibly at the rate of 120 to 150 per minute; his bodily temperature, measured by a thermometer placed in the mouth, is over 100 deg. Fahr., and he complains of a sensation of extreme heat. After sitting in a current of humid air, at a temperature of 81 deg., and allowing cool water to pour over his body, the distress and exhaustion

pass off, and in half an hour the heart beats with but natural frequency, and the temperature in the mouth falls below 98 degrees.” Obviously only men of exceptionally robust constitution could work under such conditions as these, while even with them the labour must be intermittent, and well-ventilated cooling places must be at hand. Again, at Monkwearmouth Colliery, with a temperature of 81 deg., relative humidity 87, the men, in consequence of the high temperature, work shorter hours. A temperature, therefore, of about 81 deg. represents the point at which the heat becomes detrimental. On the whole, Dr. Sanderson thinks that mining is not practicable in moist air of a temperature equal to that of the blood, viz. 98 degrees, excepting at very short intervals, and that even at 90 deg. the loss would be very considerable.

Taking 98 deg., then, as the extreme limit at which mining operations are within the scope of human endurance, the next point to be determined is, at what depth is that temperature met with? In this country the temperature of the earth is constant, at a depth of fifty feet, at 50 deg. Fahr., and increases 1 deg. for every sixty feet of depth. At this rate the point at which a temperature of 98 deg. would be reached would be 3,000 feet below the surface. This calculation, however, makes no allowance for ventilation. The problem how adequately to ventilate deep mines is one the importance of which can hardly be over-estimated either in its bearing upon the future of our coal trade, or in its relation to the preservation of the life and limb of the miner. The subject is, however, encompassed with difficulties. In deep mines the outlay of capital involved in sinking pits to coal lying at extreme depths would make it necessary to work a large area of coal from each sinking. This in turn would require air-courses of great length. Now, improvement of ventilation means the transmission through these passages of greater volumes of air. Greater volume can be obtained either by increasing the velocity of the current or by en-

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larging the sectional area of the shafts and air-courses. Increase of velocity is practically impossible, because of the enormous power required to produce it. Enlarged shafts, therefore, must be resorted to. But even with increased volumes of air, it seems clear that the diminution of temperature would be inconsiderable, except in the immediate vicinity of the incoming current. The difference of summer and winter, it is well known, is imperceptible in deep mines, except at short distances from the shaft. With the view of elucidating this point, Sir William Armstrong, one of the Commissioners, undertook a series of experiments in which air was forced through pipes of different lengths and sizes immersed in hot water, the temperatures being observed at the point of emergence. In these experiments the pipes represented the air-courses of a deep mine, the hot water being the heated strata through which the air would be conveyed. It was uniformly found that with short pipes, representing short distances from the shaft, increased circulation had considerable effect in reducing temperature, but in the longer pipes the cooling effects of the augmented volume of air was insignificant. These results accord exactly with observations made in the Rosebridge Colliery—the deepest mine in England—and show that in air-passages of great length increased disparity of temperature is quickly subdued by the accelerated absorption of heat which it occasions. So far, then, as experience has hitherto gone, it appears that even in mines where the most approved expedients are in operation, and the “long-wall” system of mining is adopted, ventilation cannot be relied on to effect a diminution of temperature averaging more than 7 deg. This reduction represents, according to the estimate just mentioned, an additional depth of 420 feet, so that the depth at which the temperature of the air would become equal to the heat of the blood would be about 3,420 feet. Allowing, then, an ample margin for the improvements which may hereafter be made in ventilation, such as, for example,

the exclusion of all moisture from the “intake” air, we arrive at a depth of 4,000 feet to which we may assume it would be practicable for human effort to penetrate, and which must, therefore, be made the limit of our available supplies of coal.

How much coal, then, have we at present in our coalfields within the limits just mentioned? The answer to this question involves nothing less than a detailed and skilled examination of each of our coal mines, and this, in turn, implies the measurement of each seam of coal and an accurate estimate of its resources, and of the probable waste in working it, based upon an acquaintance with all the geological and physical conditions of the neighbourhood. The difficulties which encompass such an undertaking are manifold. The frequent occurrence of “faults” in the seams, completely altering, in some cases, the character of the formation; the irregularity in the thickness of the seams, so that seams three or four feet thick in one colliery thin out to such an extent as to be practically unworkable in another; the change in the constitution of the coal itself, so that what is good coal at one pit becomes too sulphurous for use at another; the probable liability to explosion, or to flooding,—all these and other considerations form so many disturbing elements in the calculation. Again, no estimate of the capacities of the future can be satisfactory which has not been grounded upon the actual experience of the past. But in many cases, owing to the carelessness of proprietors or to other causes, the information as to the past yield of the pits is traditional and not documentary, while the plans of old excavations are incorrect and insufficient. Under these circumstances, of course, only an approximate estimate can be made. But that such a calculation could be made at all is a gratifying proof of the advance of geological and mining science in this country. Each of the great coalfields of the United Kingdom has been entrusted to a Commissioner, who has, to use the words of one of them, “computed each series of

seams with as much care as if purchase and sale depended on it." Of the labours expended in the mapping of the seams and the computation of quantities, no one can have any adequate idea who has not looked into the ponderous volumes which contain the reports and plans. The reports distinguish each vein of coal, and show its extent in acres, the total quantity of coal originally contained therein, the deductions for faults, waste, &c., the amount of coal already excavated, and the net quantity of coal remaining unwrought. And these are the results of this great stock-taking in our national coal-cellar:—

	Tons.
Probable quantity of coal actually existing in the ascertained coalfields of the United Kingdom . .	90,207,000,000
Coal which probably exists at workable depths under the Permian, New Red Sandstone, and other superincumbent strata .	56,273,000,000
Making an aggregate quantity available for future use, of	146,480,000,000

These being the estimates of our available coal, let us now see what relation they bear to our consumption. The latter has grown with marvellous rapidity. It is impossible, indeed, not to be struck with the very short space of time which has sufficed for the development of the coal trade. Coal mines are not even mentioned in Domesday Book; the Boldon Book of Henry II. only hints at "coal-finders;" and the mineral was not recognized by authority till 1259, when Henry III. granted a charter to the freemen of Newcastle to dig coals. The new fuel encountered, however, great opposition. Its fumes were said to injure the complexion and to undermine health. Meat cooked by it was declared to be tainted. To such a height did these prejudices rise, that Edward I. prohibited the introduction of coal into London, and a man was actually executed for the violation of the law. But meanwhile, with the growth of civilization, the old system of lighting the fire in the middle

of the room, and of allowing the smoke to escape through a hole in the roof, began to fall into disuse. Gradually chimneys were introduced, and the use of coal steadily advanced. By the beginning of the seventeenth century the old prejudices had almost died out in England, though they found a congenial home in Paris. In the latter capital, it is said that so recently as half a century ago, an English ambassador found his parties attended only by gentlemen, the ladies refusing to accept the invitation because he used coal fires. The total produce of the United Kingdom rose from two and a quarter million tons in 1660, to five millions in 1750, and to 10,000,000 tons in 1800. Then came the development of canal navigation, which necessitated larger supplies, the consumption being, in 1816, 27,000,000 tons, while in 1869 there were extracted from the coal mines of the United Kingdom 107,000,000 tons. Our present annual consumption may be fairly reckoned at 115,000,000 tons. It seems, therefore, that within two and a half centuries we have made such ample calls upon our inheritance that we have now to ask, Will it hold out for our children?

Now, if our drain upon the pits were to rise as steadily in the future as it has risen during the past few years, the prospect would be indeed deplorable. For, under such conditions, the annual consumption of coal would reach 2,607,000,000 tons at the end of a century, a strain upon our coalfields which would render them barren in 110 years. And it is worthy of note that this estimated consumption, which is that of Professor Jevons, has up to this time nearly accorded with observation. Mr. Jevons, writing in 1864, calculated that the rate of growth in the aggregate annual consumption of coal amounted to about $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum of the previous year's supply. Thus he arrived at an estimated consumption for the year 1871 of nearly 118,000,000, about two and a half millions only over that which has actually been determined. But the

continued operation of such a rate of growth as this seems to imply that population will expand during the next century at the same rate as that arrived at since 1800 A.D., and that the consumption per head of the population will also increase at corresponding rates. Now, as Mr. Price Williams points out, though the population of the United Kingdom steadily grows, yet the rate of that growth steadily diminishes. For instance, from 1811 to 1821 the increase was 16 per cent., while in the decade just concluded, from 1861 to 1871, it was only 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. Again, Mr. Williams still further shows that even if—as is proved by statistics—the consumption of coal per head increases each year, still the rate of that increase also is annually diminishing. The present rapid increase in the annual production of coal, and, to a minor degree, in the population itself, are the consequences, in Mr. Williams's opinion, “of the abnormal development of our commercial activity which has followed the introduction of steam power into this country.” The question, then, of the probable duration of our coal supply must be based upon calculations of constantly diminishing ratios. Accordingly, a series of estimates has been prepared on these assumptions, and with these results, that—

In A.D. 1971, the population will be 59,000,000, and the home consumption 274,000,000 tons.

In A.D. 2071, the population will be 93,000,000, and the home consumption 433,000,000 tons.

In A.D. 2171, the population will be 120,000,000, and the home consumption 558,000,000 tons.

In A.D. 2231, the population will have reached to 132,000,000, the consumption to 613,000,000 tons, and our coal-fields will have become exhausted.

Shortly stated, the various views which may be taken of the national future, show the following conclusions:—That on the principle of an increase of consumption expanding at a diminishing

rate, our coal supply will last 360 years; on the principle of the addition of a constant quantity equal to the average annual increase of the last fourteen years the supply will last only 276 years; while, on the principle that the present consumption will not be enlarged at all, or, if enlarged, that the addition will be cancelled by future reductions, the supply will last 1,273 years.

And now, having computed the extent of our stores of coal and estimated their duration, the question comes—Are we economical in the use of our treasures, or is there waste which might be prevented? True, it must never be forgotten that the repression of waste has a tendency rather to promote than to retard consumption. The introduction of economies into the use of coal cheapens all commodities in the production of which coal is a factor, and thus augments the demand for them, thereby stimulating the consumption of fuel. To arrest waste, however, is at least to substitute profitable for unprofitable consumption, and the subject has accordingly occupied no small share of the attention of the Commission. A cloud of witnesses, consisting of eminent iron-masters, civil engineers, and managers of factories, has been examined, and several of the more important ironworks and steam factories have been visited by the Commissioners in person. And they tell us that there is waste in combustion everywhere—in the production of steam power, in the iron blast and puddling furnaces, and in the manufacture of other metals than iron. In theory, one pound of pure coal in combustion should lift ten millions of pounds a foot high; in practice, only one-tenth of that energy is attained. In theory, a pound of pure coal should evaporate thirteen pounds of water; in practice, the best coals show scarcely half that result. In ordinary steam-engines, indeed, not one-thirtieth of the theoretic value of coal is realized in power. Of course, it is in the highest degree improbable that the perfection indicated by theory will ever be reached in practice, but it is certain that only in proportion as a theoretic standard has

been striven after have improvements been introduced. A careful perusal of the evidence collected on this subject suggests the conclusion, that however important the discovery of better modes of combustion may be, what is wanted now is a more general and persistent adoption of those already known. Take, for example, the utilization of the waste heat of blast and puddling furnaces. The non-professional reader may well confess to some feelings of disappointment when he hears that in the blast furnace, working in what we may call its normal state, nearly two-thirds of the total quantity of heat produced escapes uselessly from the mouth of the furnace. For upwards of forty years the efforts of scientific men have been directed to the best modes of remedying this waste, or of converting it into an agent of production. One great result has been the application of these gases to heat the currents of air which are driven into the furnace. This substitution of the hot for the cold blast, wherever adopted, has proved a most effective and economical expedient. "By the application of the hot blast," says Dr. Percy, "the same amount of fuel reduced three times as much iron, and the same amount of blast did twice as much work, as previously." Two and a quarter tons of coal will now reduce as much crude iron as required formerly six and a quarter tons. Moreover, these waste gases may be collected from the top of the furnaces and employed under the boilers for the production of steam. Or, again, by the use of such admirable inventions as Siemen's regenerative gas furnaces, in which almost perfect combustion is obtained, these gases may be utilized in the furnace itself. Here, then, are improved processes which are capable of easy adoption, and which, in the manufacture of iron alone, have effected, during the last ten years, a saving of not less than twenty per cent. of the fuel used. Yet we find that of the six thousand puddling furnaces at work in 1869, only a very small number had adopted any arrangement for utilizing the waste heat. In South Wales,

for instance, the waste heat of the puddling and mill furnaces is amply sufficient to produce all the steam required. No coal is really necessary for that purpose, and it follows, therefore, that in that district there is used over a quarter of a million of tons of coal yearly which might be saved.

And it must never be forgotten that loss of power and dissipation of an invaluable agent in production are not the only consequences of this deplorable waste. A journey through the coal-producing districts shows other and worse results. The dense volumes of black smoke which pour from the chimneys poison the atmosphere and destroy vegetation. And what injures vegetable life stunts human growth, and in the train of the smoke follow dirt, disease, and crime. Now, these evils are nearly all preventable. They are mainly the result of bad stoking—itsself the offspring of ignorance, or of a vulgar idea that it is a fine thing to burn as much coal as possible. In Cornwall, where a more careful system of stoking has been devised, the engines show a "duty" more nearly approaching to theoretic perfection than in any other part of the kingdom. Even there, however, we regret to find from the valuable records preserved by Mr. Lean that within the last few years habits of carelessness have crept in, and there is a decline in the effective power obtained, and, in consequence, an increase in the coal consumed.

On the whole, we may feel assured that economical contrivances are steadily making their way in the great industries which are based on coal. The labours of the Commission, by directing attention to the need for, and to the possibility of, such contrivances, will doubtless contribute somewhat to the now general adoption of them; but, obviously, the great incentive to economy in consumption will be the increased cost of the article consumed. In many districts this influence has hitherto scarcely operated at all; those in which it has been felt are precisely those in which regenerative furnaces are employed and

waste heat is utilized. But, though subordinate to this influence in respect to its efficacy, yet still valuable as an economical expedient, would be the scientific training of the men employed. A more exact education for our younger engineers, especially in that branch of philosophy which deals with the convertibility of motion and heat, and such a knowledge of elementary science amongst workmen as should at least teach them how best to stoke their furnaces, would quickly lead to a diminished consumption of fuel. On both these points it would seem that we are, as a nation, inferior to France and Germany.

But let not the reader think that the ironmaster and smelter are alone responsible for the waste of our mineral treasures. To each paterfamilias we may say—

“Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur.”

The manufacture of iron consumes annually between thirty and thirty-five millions of tons of coal, while, for domestic purposes only, one ton is burnt for every man, woman, and child in the kingdom. Now, a vast proportion of this consumption might be saved if Englishmen would consent to give up the open stove. Open fires in our kitchens and drawing-rooms are admirable attempts at solving the problem how not to do it. The defects of the open fireplaces, we are told, are recognized; the modes of remedying them are within the reach of everybody, yet it is certain that the public do not generally avail themselves of the opportunity of saving fuel by their adoption. The truth is, the open fire is a *luxury* which English men and women will most unwillingly forego. And is it not indeed a luxury? We recall Cowper's lines—

“Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtain, wheel the sofa round,
And while the bubbling and loud-hissing
urn

Throws up a steaming column, and the cups
That cheer but not inebriate wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.”

Who does not feel that the cosiness and the comfort of this scene depend mainly

on the ruddy glow of a visible fire? For the open fireplace, substitute the hot-air pipes which science recommends, and the parlour degenerates into the classroom, and the family party into a mutual improvement society. In this matter, however, we may anticipate further improvements. When once the subject is taken up earnestly, we believe it will be found practicable greatly to utilize fuel, and at the same time retain the open fire, and ensure adequate ventilation.

Such, then, are the results at which the Coal Commission has arrived. After five years' hard work they have measured the contents of the national coal-cellar, and have endeavoured to predict how long the cellar will hold out. Their calculations oscillate between 276 and 1,273 years, within which limits there is ample scope for speculation and conjecture. Their estimates assume that the production of coal will continue unabated until the point of absolute exhaustion is reached, and then suddenly cease. But of course such an event, though necessarily assumed for purposes of calculation, could never actually happen. In reality, coal would get gradually dearer as the supply diminished or the cost of excavation increased, until a scarcity-price was reached. This scarcity-price would, in turn, reduce consumption, and the saving thus effected would, in all probability, operate first of all on those trades which are connected with the production of metals. But, meanwhile, the importation of coal would have commenced. Indeed, as a matter of fact, much of the coal included in the preceding estimates would probably never be worked at all, for the simple reason that it would be cheaper to import the stores of other countries than to raise our own under conditions of great depth or peculiar difficulty. And other nations can well spare us of their abundance. America alone possesses coalfields of seventy times the area of our own. The coal supply of the world is practically inexhaustible.

By the operation, then, of the ordinary laws of commercial intercourse, anything like the absolute exhaustion

of our coalfields will be prevented. But can this country hope to maintain her manufacturing supremacy when obliged to import coal? Does not the greatness of England rest on one foundation, the co-existence of coal and iron,—the proximity of the most generally useful metal to the mineral best fitted to manufacture it? What will happen when we can no longer produce coal and iron cheaper than other countries? This is the real coal question, and it is one upon which no Royal Commission, however laborious and able, can throw much light. For into such a problem, moral as well as material considerations enter. Its solution depends quite as much on *what a nation is* as on *what a nation has*; on an innate capacity to encounter the altered conditions of commercial enterprise, and extract therefrom the elements of yet greater prosperity and larger growth. But these elements cannot be measured by the statistician, nor moulded by the statesman.

For the present, we know that there is an ample supply of coal for many generations to come; that we need not apprehend a sudden collapse of our manufacturing industry, with its accompaniments of a fall in rent, wages, and profits. We need not contemplate the spectacle of silent foundries and deserted workshops, of solitary grass-grown streets, of collieries, once resonant with the hum of labour and luminous with the glare of furnace-fires, now dumb and desolate and dark. Our duty is to repress waste in every way, and to be on the alert for the discovery of new motive powers, of new modes of producing heat. For the future, we must rely on that geographical position which, intermediate between the Old and New worlds, has benefited us quite as much as our material wealth; and on the sagacity, energy, and industry which

made England great before coal was generally known, which, recently, sustained the nation during the temporary dethronement of King Cotton, and which will assuredly serve us should the sceptre fall from the hands of King Coal.

P.S.—Since the above was written, the unprecedented advance in the price of coal has invested the subject with a familiar and personal interest which neither the investigations of scientific men nor the apprehensions of statesmen could have given it. The rise of prices has of course affected different kinds of coal unequally, and may, without exaggeration, be computed at considerably over 50 per cent. The Board of Trade returns show that in July 1871 we exported 1,127,000 tons, the value of which was 535,883*l.*; while in July 1872 we exported 1,164,000 tons, valued at 850,376*l.* That is, in the former month the average price of coal exported was 9*s.* 6*d.* a ton, in the latter, 14*s.* 7*d.*, an advance of 53 per cent. Into the causes of this remarkable advance we cannot enter now. The insufficiency of supply, however, is, we believe, only temporary, consequent upon a very large sudden demand and other exceptional causes. The rise does not indicate a collapse in the productiveness of the mines. Nevertheless, we may reasonably hope that now that public attention is thoroughly aroused, permanent results will follow. Meanwhile, we rejoice that the British Association has resolved to solve the problem as to the existence or not of coal in the south-eastern counties; and, while we write, the boring apparatus of the Association is slowly making its way through the Sub-Wealden formation in Sussex in search of the mineral wealth beneath.

ALFRED S. HARVEY.

THE TWO MARYS.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

I. MY OWN STORY.

CHAPTER I.

My name is Mary Peveril. My father was the incumbent of a proprietary chapel in that populous region which lies between Holborn and the New Road—a space within which there is a great deal of wealth and comfort, a great deal of penury and pain, but neither grandeur nor abject misery. I like those streets, though I know there is no loveliness in them. I feel that I can breathe better when I come out into the largeness and spacious widths of the squares, and I take a pleasure which many people will laugh at in the narrow paved passages—crooked and bent like so many elbows, with their bookstalls and curious little shops. How often have I strayed about them with my father, holding on by his coat-skirts when I was little, by his arm when I grew tall, while he stood and gazed at the books which he could so seldom afford to buy. When he found a cheap one that pleased him, how his face brightened up! While he looked at them I was not often thinking what the thoughts might be in his mind. What was I thinking of—swinging by the skirts of his coat, or by his arm when I grew a great girl? How can I tell? Thinking how bright the twinkling lights were; how funny life was, so full of people passing whom we never saw again—of paving-stones and shop-windows; and droll with whispering airs that blew round the corners, and always seemed to want to tell you something; and again more lights and more faces and more shop-windows. In winter these passages always felt warm and comfortable, and I had some theory about them which I scarcely remember now—something like the theory of the poor man whom I once heard saying that he

went into the streets by night because the gaslights made them so warm. The desolateness of such a forlorn being, seeking warmth in the lighted streets, did not strike me when I heard that speech; I only felt I understood him, and had frequently been conscious of the same feeling. But I remember very well how once, when I was swinging back a little upon papa's arm, clinging to him, proud of showing that I belonged to him and was old enough to take his arm, yet separate from him, as youth so often is, thinking my own thoughts, living in another world, I all at once caught the illumination on his face as he fell upon a book he wanted which was cheap enough to be bought. To think he should really care about such a trifle—he—papa, the clergyman whom everybody looked up to; that he should look as pleased about it as Ellen our servant did when she got a new dress! I was half humiliated, half sympathetic. Poor papa! What a pity he could not buy a great many books when he cared so much for them. But yet, I think, a little sense of shame on his behalf, and of humiliation, mingled with that more amiable thought; that he should care so much about anything, seemed somehow a derogation from his dignity, a descent on his part into a less lofty place.

We lived in Southampton Street, in the end where there are no shops. We had two very white steps before our front-door, which was the brightest point about us. When anyone asked in that street where the clergyman of St. Mark's lived, the house was always pointed out by this: "No. 75, the house with the white steps." I used to think for years and years that they were a natural feature, and had nothing to do with any work of man, or rather, woman. It was

a shabby house inside. There were two little kitchens in the basement, two little parlours on the ground-floor, two little bedrooms above that, and on the top storey I think there were three divisions instead of two. One of the little parlours—the back one, which looked out upon a little square yard about the same size—was papa's study. It was not a cheerful room, with that outlook upon four brick walls, and a little square bit of mouldy black soil in which flourished some poor tufts of grass, and the big water-butt in the foreground, where the water was black with soot—when there was any water at all. The room had a writing-table in it, always covered with books and papers, and papa's chair—black haircloth, beginning to wear white at the edges—between the table and the fire, and two other black chairs standing against the opposite wall. It was divided by folding doors from the parlour, in which we lived. This room was furnished with a haircloth sofa, half-a-dozen chairs, a round table with a close-fitting oilcloth cover, and, thrust up into a corner, an old piano, upon which I practised sometimes, and which on other occasions served as a sideboard. There was a short Venetian blind at the lower part of the window to keep people from seeing in, and a chair in the recess, on which I used to sit and darn papa's stockings and dream. Sometimes I read, but, generally, dreaming was more fun. I made out such nice new lives for myself and papa. Sometimes I would dream that we were quite different people from what we appeared to be—great people, rich and noble, with all kinds of grandeur belonging to us, though no one knew; and how it would be found out all of a sudden, to the confusion of everybody who had ever been uncivil. I used to trace out, as minutely as if I had seen it, every detail of what we were to do. I was Lady Mary in these visions; and if anyone had called me so I should have been, I am sure, more shocked to think that *it* had been prematurely discovered than struck by the unreality of the title. It was not unreal to me. Sometimes it would take

other shapes, and my imagination would content itself with the notion of someone dying and leaving us a fortune, and how we would wear mourning and do our very best to be sorry; but the other idea was much the favourite. It was very sweet to me to think that, for all so humble and so unknown as we were, things would appear very different *if people but knew!* The old life comes round me as I go back to it, the afternoon sounds in the street—vulgarsounds, but softened by summer air as much as if they had been *the* sweetest; the drowsy tinkle of the *na-ffin-man's* bell, the prolonged cry of “water-cre-e-sses!” the sound of children's voices and dogs barking, and distant wheels that always ground out an accompaniment; and myself in the window, poor Mr. Peveril the clergyman's daughter, to my own knowledge Lady Mary, and a very great, small person. I wonder which was the real Mary—she or I.

I have heard that in poor mamma's time we were so fine as to have a drawing-room upstairs on the first floor, like Mrs. Stephens next door; but that splendour was long, long over, for mamma died soon after I was born, and I was left all alone—a small baby, with papa on my hands to look after. I do not think, however, that I was at any time very sorry for this. I was sorry for her, who died so young, but not for myself; I felt instinctively that, had she been there, always poking between papa and me, I should not have liked it, and that on the whole things were best as they were. The room which had been the drawing-room was papa's bedroom, and I slept in the room behind, over his study. Ellen had the three little places up above all to herself, though one of them was called—I don't know why—the spare room. In this little place we lived, and never asked ourselves whether it was dingy or not. The walls were dark, with papers which had not been renewed so long as I could remember; and the curtains were dark, and always had the look of being dusty, though, thanks to Ellen, they never were so in reality.

We had no pictures, except two old prints from Raphael's cartoons. One was the "Miraculous draught of fishes," and the other "Peter and John at the beautiful gate of the Temple." How I remember those twisted pillars, and how many dreams have they twisted through ! But I never admired them, though they were part of my life. I should have liked a landscape better, or some pretty faces like those one sometimes sees in the shop-windows. When the people who went to St. Mark's talked of having a lithograph of papa the thought made me wild with excitement ; but the lithograph was never done.

It must not be supposed, however, that papa and I lived in that state of ecstatic delight in each other's society which one hears of often in books. There were no great demonstrations between us. I led my own life by the side of his, and he, I suppose, lived his by me, like two parallel lines which never meet whatever you may please to do. I do not know that it occurred to me to think articulately that the happiness of my life depended on him. I did not seek to sit in his study or to be near him while he worked, as I have heard of girls doing. I was quite satisfied to be in the parlour while he was busy on the other side of the closed doors ; indeed, until he ceased to be all mine, I accepted papa as calmly as I did the other accessories of my life. When he went out to dinner, which was a very rare occurrence, yet happened sometimes, I would make myself very comfortable with a book over my tea. I was fond of going out with him ; but then, he was the only person who ever took me out, through amusing places, where there were shop-windows and crowds of people passing. I had not been brought up to have my walk regularly every day, like well-educated children. I walked when I could. Sometimes I had an errand to do—something to buy or order, which I did by myself in one of the shops of the neighbourhood ; but this was an office I hated, for I was too shy to go into a shop with any pleasure ; and sometimes old Mrs. Tufnell would send for me to walk

in the square, which was fine, but not very amusing. I liked the passages about Holborn with the bookstalls a great deal better. But we did not talk a great deal even in these walks. Sometimes I would be seized with a fit of inquiry, and would pester papa with a torrent of questions ; but at other times I fell back into my dreams, and would be making some splendid expedition as Lady Mary all the time, while I hung, always a little behind him, on his arm, leaving him as undisturbed as, generally, he left me. I think of this calm of indifference now, when I look back upon it, with very odd feelings. Is it that one does not care so long as one has those whom one loves all to one's self ? It is only, I suppose, where your rights are interfered with that you grow violent about them. I suppose it was the fact that we loved each other—I him, and he me—that made us happy ; but it was so natural to love each other that we thought little about it, and I am afraid it would have surprised me a little in my secret heart if any one had told me that my happiness depended upon papa.

The way in which this tranquil ease of possession was disturbed was a very gentle and gradual one—at least, so I can see now, though at the time it appeared to me most abrupt and terrible. My idea of my father was that he was old, as a child's ideas generally are ; but he was not old. He was about five-and-forty when I was fifteen. He was not tall—and he stooped, which made him look still less so. At fifteen I was as tall as he was. He had a handsome, refined face, with very clear features, and a sort of ivory complexion. His hair was worn off his temples, and there were a great many lines in his face—partly with trouble, partly with work ; but his smile was the sweetest smile I ever saw, and he had a way of captivating everybody. I have heard it said since that this power of fascination did not last, and that he grew melancholy and monotonous after the first few times you had seen him ; and though I was very angry when I heard this first, I can with an effort believe that it might be true. I suppose

it was the same faculty which showed itself at church, where there were always new people coming, who attended closely for a few weeks and then went away. He was like a man who gives you everything he has at once, and then has nothing more for you. At home he was silent, always kind, but never saying much. I scarcely recollect ever to have been scolded by him. Ellen scolded me, and so did old Mrs. Tufnell, and even Mrs. Stephens next door; but papa only said, "Poor child!" with the air of a compassionate spectator, when I was complained of to him. Our chief conversation was at meals, when he would sometimes talk a little, and tell me of things he had seen or heard; and it was at tea one evening that he first brought forward the name of the other person who was henceforward to stand between us. No such thought was in his mind then, I am sure; but he was more communicative than usual. He told me that he had seen a young lady on one of his visits, in a very strange place for such a person to be found in—in the back parlour of a small grocer's shop which I knew quite well. He told me quite a long story about her—how she was an orphan and had been left destitute, and had been obliged to go back to her mother's family, who had been a governess in her day, and married much above her. Her father, too, was dead, having been of no use whatever in the world or to her, and there was no prospect before her but that of going out to be a governess—a thing which papa seemed to think a great hardship for her. I had been trained to believe that some such place would have to be mine as papa got older and I grew a woman; therefore I was not at all shocked by the suggestion. I said: "Has she heard of any nice situation, papa?" with the quietest matter-of-fact acceptance of his words.

"Heard of a situation! You talk very much at your ease, Mary,—if you saw this elegant, accomplished, refined girl," said my father. "Poor thing, I cannot bear to think that she should be driven to such a fate."

I did not make any answer. I was

surprised. It had never occurred to me that it was "such a fate." Most girls, it seemed to me, who were not great ladies were governesses, both in the little real world with which I was acquainted and in books.

"Poor thing!" he said again. "Poor thing! how I wish there was any possible way of saving her. What a thing it is to be poor!"

"But any situation would be better than staying with the Spicers," I said. "Think, papa—the Spicers! I should not mind being a governess—I suppose I shall be, some day or other—but I should hate living in a parlour behind a shop."

"Well, Mary, I hope you will see her sometimes, and when you do see her you must be very kind to her," said my father with a sigh; and that night he drew his chair to the fire and tried to talk, which was a thing that took me very much by surprise. But, unfortunately, I had a new book which was very interesting, and instead of responding to this unusual inclination, as I ought to have done, I kept on reading, making pettish and uncertain replies, until he grew tired of the attempt and gave it up, and got a book too, as usual. He sighed a little as he did so, with a sort of disappointed air; and through my reading and my interest in the story somehow I perceived this, and felt guilty and uncomfortable all the rest of the evening. When I had finished my volume I was very conciliatory, and tried all I could to bring him back to the point where he had given it up, but it was of no use. I have always found it exactly so in my experience. If you are too stupid, or too much occupied with yourself, to take just the right moment for explanations, you never can recover the thread which you have allowed to slip through your fingers. Even to this day I often wonder what papa would have said to me that night had I let him speak. I have invented whole conversations, but they never were much satisfaction to me. To think out what perhaps some one might have said is very different from hearing them say it.

I was not at all pleased with myself that evening when I went to bed; but perhaps this was partly because I had finished my novel and it was not satisfactory, and seemed, now it was over, such a poor sort of thing to have preferred to a conversation with papa.

Nothing, however, happened for some time after this to put me on my guard. I went on in my old careless way. If he was out a little more than usual, I paid no attention. All that was quite natural. Of course he had his duties to attend to. He dined at Mrs. Tufnell's once during this time, and was very particular about his tie, and about having his coat brushed. "It is quite nice," I said; "it was well brushed on Monday morning before it was put away. Why, papa, I thought you did not like a fuss: how you laughed at me for being so particular about my sash when we went to the party at Mrs. Overend's. Shouldn't you like to have a sash too?"

He laughed, but he did not look like laughing; and I remember stopping short in the middle of my tea, and laying down my book to ask myself if anything could be the matter with him. One or two odd people whom I did not know had come to see him of late. Was it possible he could be ill? But no, he ate as usual, and he had looked quite ruddy when he went out. So I took up my novel again, and helped myself to jam, and thought no more of it. I believe the whole business was decided, or the next thing to decided, that night.

I could if I liked have heard a great deal of what was said in the study while I sat at work in the parlour, and this was a thing which Mrs. Tufnell and Mrs. Stephens had often remarked. They thought it "not quite nice," for, to be sure, people might say things to papa as their clergyman which they did not wish to be overheard. But it could not well be helped, for there was no other room where I could sit. I have said too that I could have heard if I liked; but the fact was I did not care, and I never heard. When you are perfectly indifferent and used to anything,

and know there is no mystery in it, it is astonishing how little you hear. I had got accustomed to the hum of voices from the study just as I had to the cries in the streets and the muffin-man's bell. Sometimes, I suppose, a word must have caught my ear now and then, but I paid no attention, and heard as if I heard it not. I was thinking of such very different things. One day, however, I did catch a few words which surprised me. It was a summer day. The back-door into the little yard and all the windows everywhere were open. The noises in the street came into the house exactly as if we were living out of doors, but so softened by the warm air and the sunshine that they were pleasant instead of being disagreeable. The day was not hot, but only deliciously, genially warm. We had put up white curtains in the parlour, and the wind blew them softly about, flapping the wooden stretcher in the blind against the window-frame. I was in a muslin dress myself; and I was happy without any reason, not in the least knowing why. I came downstairs singing, as I had a way of doing, and went into the parlour and sat down in the window. I gave up singing when I sat down, partly because it might have disturbed papa, and partly because people stopped to listen as they were passing. I was running up the breadths of my new frock, a blue print, which was as bright and pretty as the day, and, to tell the truth, did not care in the least what the voices were saying on the other side of the folding doors. I had made noise enough to demonstrate my presence, and, as nothing was ever hid from me, it never came into my head to listen. It was Spicer the grocer's voice, I think, which attracted my ear at last. It was a strange, little, harsh, snappish voice, so unharmonious that it worried one like a dog barking; and by degrees, as he talked and talked, some sort of vague association came into my mind—something which I had half forgotten. What was it I had heard about the Spicers? I could not recollect all at once.

"Governessing ain't paradise," said

Spicer, "but it's better perhaps than other things. Marrying a man as is in poor health, and at a troublesome time o' life—and nothing to leave to them as comes after him; that ain't much, Mr. Peveril. A woman's best married, I allow; but marriage has consequences, and when there's no money——"

I did not hear what my father said in reply, and indeed I did not care to hear. I was half annoyed, half amused, by Spicer's queer little barking voice.

"Forty-five, sir? no, it ain't old—but it ain't young neither. I've known many a man carried off at forty-five. Them things have all got to be considered; though for that matter twenty-five would make little difference. The thing is, here's a young woman as has a trade she can make her living by. A man comes in, marries her right off: they have a child or two in natural course, and then he goes and dies. Nothing more natural or more common. But then you see, Mr. Peveril, sir, here's the question: what's to become of her? And that's the question I've got to consider. I've a family myself, and I can't put myself in the way of having to support another man's family; and a woman can't go out and be a governess, it stands to reason, with two or three young uns on her hands."

My father said something here in a very earnest, low, grave voice, which really attracted my curiosity for the first time. Whatever he was saying, he was very serious about it, and his tone, though I could not hear what he said, woke me up. Perhaps he warned Spicer to talk low; but at all events I heard nothing more for some time, except the grumbling and barking of the grocer's voice, in a much subdued tone. They seemed to argue, and Spicer seemed to yield. At last he got up to go away, and then I heard him deliver his final judgment on the matter, whatever it was, standing close to the folding doors.

"You speaks fair, sir. I don't say but what you speaks fair. Granting life and health, it's a fine thing for her, and a honour for us. And taking the other side of the question, as I'm bound

to take it, I wouldn't say but the insurance makes a difference. A woman with a thousand pounds and a babby is no worse off than if she hadn't neither—and Missis is better nor Miss in the way of setting up a school or such like. I may say, Mr. Peveril, as the insurance makes a great difference. A thousand pound ain't much for a dependance; and if there was a lot of little uns—but to be sure, in them matters you must go on providence to a certain extent. I'll think it over, sir—and I don't see as I've any call to make objections, if her and you's made up your minds." Then there was a step towards the door, and then Spicer came to a stand-still once more. "First thing," he said, "Mr. Peveril, is the insurance. You won't put it off, sir? I've known them as meant it every day o' their lives, and never did it when all was done; and died and left their families without e'er a ——"

"It shall be done at once," said my father peremptorily, and almost angrily; and then there was a begging of pardon, and a scraping and shuffling, and Spicer went away. I saw him go out, putting his hat on as he shut the door. I never liked Spicer—of course he was one of the parishioners, and papa could not refuse his advice to him or to any one; but I made a face at him as he went away. I felt quite sure he was the sort of man one sometimes reads of in the newspapers, who put sand in the sugar, and sell bad tea to the poor people, and have light weights. This was in my mind along with a vague, faint curiosity as to what he had been talking about, when to my surprise papa came into the parlour. He came in quickly, with a flush on his face, and the most uneasy, uncomfortable look I ever saw a man have. Was he ashamed of something? —ashamed! he—papa!

"I suppose you have heard all that Spicer has been saying, Mary," he said to me, quite abruptly. He gave me one strange look, and then turned away, and gazed at the Beautiful gate of the Temple which hung over the mantelpiece as if he had never seen it before.

"Yes," I said; and then it suddenly

flashed upon me that Spicer's talk had not been exactly of a kind to be overheard by a girl, and that this was why poor papa looked so embarrassed and uncomfortable. He felt that it was not proper for me. "I heard a little of it," I said instantly, "but I never listen, you know, papa, and I don't know in the least what he was talking about."

Poor papa! how delicate he was; how shocked I should have heard anything I ought not to know—though it was not so dreadful after all, for of course everybody knows that when people are married they have babies. But he did not like to look me in the face; he kept his back to me, and gazed at the twisted pillars.

"Mary," he said, "I have a little explanation to make to you."

"An explanation?" I looked at him over my blue print, wondering what it could be; but it did not seem worth while to stop working, and I threaded my needle and made a knot on my thread while I waited for what he was going to say. Then suddenly my heart began to beat a little fast, and the thought crossed my mind that perhaps my dreams were about to become true, and that he knew all about it as well as I, and was just going to tell me I was Lady Mary, and he Earl of ——. I had never been able to choose a satisfactory title, and I could not invent one on the spur of the moment; but instinctively I gave a glance from the window to see whether the beautiful carriage was in sight, coming to take us to our splendid home.

"Perhaps I ought to have taken you into my confidence before," he said, "for you have been brought up a lonely girl, and ought to feel for people who are lonely. I have been very lonely myself, very desolate, ever since your poor mother died."

Here my heart gave a slight stir, and I felt angry, without knowing exactly why. Lonely? Why, he had always had me!

"When you are older," he went on nervously, "you will feel what a dreadful thing the want of companionship is.

You have been a good child, Mary, and done all you could for me. I should not have been able to live without you; but when a man has been used to a companion of—of his own standing, it is a great change to him to fall back upon a child."

I grew angrier and angrier; I could scarcely tell why. A feeling of disappointment, of heart-sinking, of fury, came over me. I had never made much fuss about adoring my father, and so forth; but to find out all at once that he had never been satisfied—never happy—

"Do you mean me?" I said, quite hoarsely, feeling as if he had wronged me, deceived me, done everything that was cruel—but with no clear notion of what was coming even now.

"Whom else could I mean?" he said, quite gently. "You are a dear, good child, but you are only a child."

Oh, how my heart swelled, till I thought it would burst! but I could not say anything. I began to tap my foot on the floor in my anger and mortification, but still I was so stupid I thought of nothing more.

"Don't look as if you thought I blamed you, Mary," said my father; "on the contrary, you have been a dear little housekeeper. But—do you remember, dear," he went on, with his voice shaking a little, "that I told you once of a young lady who lived with the Spicers?"

It began to dawn upon me now. I turned round upon him, and stared at him. Oh, how pleased I was to see his eyes shrink, and to see the embarrassed look upon his face! I would not give him any quarter; I felt my own face growing crimson with shame, but I kept looking at him, compelling him to keep opposite to me, preventing him from hiding that blush. Oh, good heavens—an *old* man—a man of forty-five—a clergyman—my father! and there he sat, blushing like some ridiculous boy.

He faltered, but he kept on, not looking at me, "I see you remember," he said, with his voice shaking like a flame in a draught of air. "She has no pros-

pect but to go out as a governess, and I cannot see her do that. I have asked her to—to—share—our home. I have asked her to—to be your—best friend ; that is, I mean, I have asked her to marry me, Mary. There ! You must have seen that I have been disturbed of late. I am very glad there is no longer this secret between my little girl and me."

And with that he kissed me quite suddenly and trembling, and went off again to the mantelshelf, and stared up at Peter and John by the Beautiful gate.

For my part I sat quite still, as if the lightning had struck me. What ought I to do ? I did not realize at first what had happened. I felt simply struck dumb. I knew that I ought to do or say something, and I could not tell what. My lips stuck together—I could not now even open my mouth ; and there he stood waiting. I suppose if I had possessed my wits at that moment I would have gone and kissed him or something. Even, I suppose, if I had stormed at him it would have been less idiotic—but I could say nothing ; I was bewildered. I sat staring into the air with my mouth open, over my blue print.

At last he made an impatient movement, and I think said something to me, which roused me out of my stupefaction. Then—I do not know what impulse it was that moved me—I asked all at once, frightened, feeling I ought to say something, "What is her name, papa ?"

"Mary Martindale," he said.

CHAPTER II.

I REMEMBER quite distinctly how people talked. They did not think I observed or listened, for I had always been a dreamy sort of girl, and never had attended much to what was said about me. At least so everybody thought. They said I had always to be shaken or pulled when anything was wanted of me, to make me listen—which is true enough, I believe ; but nevertheless I was not half so absent as people thought at any time, and heard a great

deal that I was not supposed to hear. And now my senses were all shaken up and startled into being. How well I recollect hearing old Mrs. Tufnell and Mrs. Stephens talking in the quiet front drawing-room in the Square, while I was in the little room behind, taking no notice, as they thought. They had given me a book and got rid of me, and though they all pretended to deplore my dreamy ways, I think on the whole it was rather a relief to get rid of a quick, inquisitive, fifteen-year-old girl, and to be able to talk in peace. It was twilight of the summer evening and we had taken tea, and the two ladies were seated at one of the windows looking out upon the Square. The windows had long, full, white curtains, hanging and fluttering from the roof to the carpet. They were seated against that soft white background in their black silk dresses, for Mrs. Tufnell was old, and Mrs. Stephens was a widow and always wore black. It was like a picture, and I, not being so happy as I used to be, sat with my book and read and listened both together. You may think this is nonsense ; but I could do it. I see them now approaching their caps to each other, with little nods and shakes of their heads, and the white curtains fluttering softly behind them. Mrs. Tufnell was a great patroness of papa's, and always went to St. Mark's regularly, and Mrs. Stephens was our very nearest neighbour, living next door.

"I hope it will turn out the best thing that could happen for *her*," said Mrs. Tufnell, nodding her head at me. They would not say any more lest they should attract my attention. "She has been greatly neglected, and left alone a great deal too much,—and I hear *she* is accomplished. Dear, dear, who would have thought that he, of all men in the world, would have taken such a step."

"I don't quite see that," said Mrs. Stephens ; "he is a young man still, and nobody could suppose he would always be contented with his child's company : besides, she is so cool and indifferent ; as if she never thought it

possible anything could happen, and I am sure she never did anything to make herself necessary or agreeable——"

"Poor child!"

"You may say 'poor child!' but yet I blame her. A girl of fifteen is a woman to all intents and purposes. She ought to have seen that there was a great deal in her power by way of making him comfortable and herself pleasant. It's rather hard to say the plain downright truth about it, you know, he being a clergyman and all that. Of course, when there is a young family one can say it is for them; but in this case there's no possible excuse—he only wanted a wife, that's all. I don't blame him; but it's a coming down—it's a disturbance of one's ideal——"

"I don't know much about ideals," said Mrs. Tufnell; "what surprises me is, if the man wanted to marry, why he didn't marry long ago, when the child was young and he had an excellent excuse. As for being a clergyman, that's neither here nor there. Clergymen are always marrying men, and it's no sin to marry."

"It disturbs one's ideal," said Mrs. Stephens; and, though Mrs. Tufnell shrugged her shoulders, I, sitting behind over my book, agreed with her. Oh the inward humiliation with which one sees one's father in love!—I suppose it would be still worse to see one's mother, but then, I never had a mother. I blushed for him a great deal more than he blushed for himself, and he did blush for himself too. If he was happy, it was a very uneasy, disturbed sort of happiness. He took me to see her—to Spicer's; and then he went himself and sat in the parlour behind the shop, and suffered, I am sure, as much as ever a man who is having his own way could suffer. Mrs. Tufnell, who was a thoroughly kind old lady, at length came to his aid, and invited Miss Martindale to stay with her the rest of the time, and to be married from her house, which was a thing which even I was grateful for. And the night before the wedding-day the old lady kissed me and said, "Things will turn out better

than you suppose, dear. It is hard upon you, but things will turn out better than you suppose."

I am not sure that this is ever a very effectual kind of comfort, but to me it was exasperating. Had I been told that things would turn out worse than I supposed, I should have liked it. It seemed to me that nothing could be half bad enough for this overturn of all plans and thoughts and life. For you must recollect that it was my life that was chiefly to be overturned. Papa liked it, I suppose, and it was his own doing—but the change was not so great to him as to me. All the little offices of authority I used to have were taken from me—my keys, which I was proud of keeping—my bills and tradesmen's books, which I had summed up since ever I can remember. I was turned out of my room, and sent upstairs to the spare room beside Ellen. In the parlour I was never alone any more, and not even my favourite corner was mine any longer. I had no more walks with papa, swinging back from his arm. She had his arm now. She made the tea, and even darned his stockings. I was nothing in the house, and she everything. If you suppose that a girl bears this sort of dethronement easily, I am here to witness to the contrary. I did not take it easily; but the thing that went to my heart most was, I think, that she was called Mary, like me. For the first few days when I heard papa call Mary I used to run to him and find her before me, and get sent away, sometimes hastily (that time I ran in and found them sitting together, he with his arm round her waist. I wonder he was not ashamed of himself, at his age!); and another time with a joke which made me furious: "It was my other Mary I wanted," he said, looking as vain and foolish as—as—. I never saw anybody look so foolish. *My* father! How it humbled me to the very ground. But then I took to never answering to the name at all, which sometimes made papa angry when it was really me he wanted. I soon came to know very well which of us he meant

by the sound of his voice, but I never let him know that I did. His voice grew soft and round as if he were singing when he called her. When he called me, it was just, I suppose, as it always had been; but I had learned the other something now, the different accentuation, and I resented the want of it, though I knew that it never had belonged to me.

All this time I have not spoken of her, though she was the cause of all. When I saw her first, in the grocer's back shop, working at frocks for the little Spicers, I could not believe my eyes. Though I had already begun to hate her as supplanting me with my father, I could not but acknowledge how very strange it was to see her there. She had on a very plain black alpaca dress, and she sat in the back parlour, amid all that smell of hams and cheese, with a sewing-machine before her; and yet she looked like a princess. She was tall and very slight, like a flower, and her head bowed a little on its stem like the head of a lily. She was pale, with dark eyes and dark hair. I believe she was very handsome—not pretty, but very handsome, almost beautiful, I have heard papa say. I allow this, to be honest, though I cannot say I ever saw it. She had a pathetic look in her eyes which sometimes felt as if it might go to one's heart. But, fortunately, she always looked happy when I saw her—absurdly happy, just as my poor foolish father did—and so I never was tempted to sympathize with her. I do not understand how anybody but an angel could sympathize with another person who was very happy and comfortable while she (or he) was in trouble. This was our situation now. She had driven me out of everything, and she was pleased; but I was cross from morning till night, and miserable, feeling that I scarcely minded whether I lived or died. Her smiles seemed to insult me when we sat at table together. She looked so much at her ease; she talked so calmly, she even laughed and joked, and sometimes said such merry, witty things, that it was all I could

do to keep from laughing too. It is painful to be tempted to laugh when you are very much injured and in a bad temper. Reading was forbidden now at meals, and neither papa nor I ever ventured to prop up a book beside us while we ate. I suppose it was a bad custom; yet my very heart revolted at the idea of changing anything because she wished it. And then she tried to be “of use” to me, as people said. She made me practise every day. She gave me books to read, getting them from the library, and taking a great deal of trouble. She tried to make me talk French with her; but to talk is a thing one cannot be compelled to do, and I always had it in my power to balk that endeavour by answering *Oui* or *Non* to all her questions. But the worst of it all was that I had no power to affect either her or papa, whatever I might do to make myself disagreeable. I suppose they were too happy to mind. When I was sulky, it was only myself I made miserable, and there is very little satisfaction in that.

I cannot but say, however, looking back, that she was kind to me, in her way. She was always good-natured, and put up with me and tried to make me talk. She was kind: but *they* were not kind. As soon as my father and she got together they forgot everything. They sat and talked together, forgetting my very existence. They went out walking together. Sometimes even he would kiss her, without minding that I was there; and all this filled me with contempt for his weakness. I could not support such nonsense—at his age, too! I remember one day rushing to Mrs. Stephens' to get rid of them and their happiness. She was well off, and I don't really know why she lived in such a street as ours. She kept two servants all for herself, and had a nice drawing-room on the first-floor very beautifully furnished, as I then thought, where she sat and saw all that was going on. Without Mrs. Stephens I think I should have died. I used to rush to her when I could bear it no longer.

"What is the matter, Mary?" she would say, looking up from her Berlin work. She had a daughter who was married—and she was always working chairs for her, and footstools, and I don't know what.

"Nothing," said I, sitting down on the stool by her wool-basket and turning over the pretty colours; and then, after I had been silent for a minute, I said, "They have gone out for a walk."

"It is very natural, my dear; you must not be jealous. It might be a question, you know, whether you liked your papa to marry; but now that he is married, it is his duty to be attentive to his wife."

"He had me before he had a wife," cried I; "why should he love her better than me? Why should he be so much happier with her than with me? He has always something to say to her: he is always smiling and pleasant. Sometimes with me he will be a whole day and never say a word. Why should he be more happy with her than with me?"

Mrs. Stephens laughed. "I can't tell you how it is, Mary, but so it is," she said; "and by and by, when you are older, you will have somebody whom you will be happier with than you ever were with your papa. That is the best of being young. When my Sophy married, it was very hard upon me to see her happier with her husband than she had been with her mother, and to know that all that sort of thing was over for me, and that I must be content with my worsted-work. But you will have a happiness of your own by and by, when you are older; so you must not grudge it so much to your poor papa. I think he is looking pale. I thought he coughed a great deal on Sunday. Is she doing anything for that cough of his, do you know?"

"I never noticed that he had a cough."

"Well, I hope *she* does," said Mrs. Stephens, with a strange look, as if she meant something. "Your papa never was strong. He has not health to be

going out of nights, and to all those concerts and things. She ought to look after his cough, Mary. If she does not, it will be she who will suffer the most."

I did not in the least understand what this meant; I had never remarked papa's cough. Yes, to be sure, he always had a little cough—nothing to speak of. I had been used to it all my life, and it was not any worse than usual—it was nothing. I told Mrs. Stephens so, and then we talked of other things.

What a long year that was! When the wedding-day came round again they had a party, and were quite gay. It was a very odd thing to see a party in our house; but, though I would not have owned this for the world, I almost think I half enjoyed it. I had got used to papa's foolish happiness, and to Mrs. Peveril's ways. By mere use and wont I had got more indifferent; and then there began to be some talk of getting a situation for me as a governess. Papa did not like the idea, but I pressed it on myself, with a feeling that something new would be pleasant. I took most of my ideas of life from novels; and if you will think of it, young ladies who are governesses in novels generally come to promotion in the end, though they may have to suffer a great deal first. I did not much mind the suffering. Whatever it may be that makes one superior to other people, one can bear it. I made up my mind to a great deal of trouble, and even persecution, and all kinds of annoyances, feeling that all this would come to something in the end. All my dreams about being Lady Mary, and a great personage, had been dispersed by my father's marriage. But now I began to dream in another way; and by degrees the old nonsense would steal in. I used to sit with a book in my hand, and see myself working in a schoolroom with the children; and then some one would come to the door, and I would be called to a beautiful drawing-room, and the lady of the house would take me in her arms and kiss me, and say, "Why did not you tell me who you were!" and there would be a lawyer in black who had come with the news.

All this I am sure is intensely silly, but so was I at the time; and that is exactly how my mind used to go on. Sometimes a gentleman would come into it, who would be intensely respectful and reverential, and whom I would always refuse, saying, "No; I will allow no one to descend from their proper rank for me!" until that glorious moment came when I was found out to be as elevated in rank as in principles. Oh, how absurd it all was! and how I liked it! and what a refuge to me was that secret world which no one ever entered but myself, and yet where so many delightful people lived whom I knew by their names, and could talk to for hours together! Sitting there under Mrs. Peveril's very nose, I would have long argumentations with my lover, and he would kiss my hand, and lay himself at my feet, and tell me that he cared for no one in the world but me; and the scene of the discovery was enacted over and over again while papa was talking of parish matters, quite unaware that by some mysterious imbroglia of affairs he was really the Earl of — So and So—(I never could hit upon a sufficiently pretty name). Thus, instead of weeping over my hard fate and thinking it dreadful to have to go out as a governess, I looked forward to it, feeling that somehow the discovery of the true state of affairs concerning us was involved in it, and that, without that probation, Fate would certainly never restore me to my due and native eminence in the world.

But, however, I must come back to the night of the anniversary, and to our party. I had on a pretty new white frock—my first long one, and I half, or more than half, enjoyed myself. Everybody was very kind to me, everybody said I was looking well; and Mrs. Tufnell and Mrs. Stephens petted me a good deal behind backs, and said "poor child!" And then papa's curate, who was one of the guests, kept following me about and trying to talk to me; whenever I looked up I met his eyes. I did not admire him in the least, but it amused me very much, and pleased

me, to see that he admired me. When I wanted anything he rushed to get it for me. It was very odd, but not at all disagreeable, and gave me a comfortable feeling about myself. When the people went away, papa stood a long time in the hall between the open doors, saying good-night to everybody. He went back into the parlour after they were all gone; he went up to the fireplace, I don't know why, and stood there for a moment as if there had been a fire in the grate. Then he called "Mary!" I might have known it was not me he wanted. He held out his hand without turning round. "I never thought I could be happier than I was this day last year," he said, "and yet I am happier to-night. What a delightful year you have given me, my darling—Oh, is it you? What did you mean by not telling me it was you, when you must have perceived that I thought I was talking to my wife?"

"There was no time to tell you," I said. It gave me a pang I can scarcely describe when he thrust my hand away which I had held out to him. He was ashamed; he sat down suddenly in the big chair, and then all at once a fit of coughing came on, such a fit of coughing as I never saw before. It frightened me; and he looked so pale, and with such circles round his eyes! When he could speak he said, hurriedly, panting for his breath, "Be sure you do not tell her of this——." That was all he thought of. It did not matter for me.

But, as it happened, it was not long possible to keep it from *her*. When I look back upon that evening, with its little follies, and the laughter, and the curate, and my new dress! Oh, how little one knows! That very night papa was taken ill. He had caught cold in the draught as he shook hands with the people. It was congestion of the lungs, and from the first the doctor looked very serious. The house changed in that night. The study and the parlour and the whole place turned into a vestibule to the sick room, which was the centre of everything. The very atmosphere was darkened; the sun did

not seem to shine; the sounds outside came to us dulled and heavy. I was not allowed to be very much in the room. She took her place there and never left him, day or night; and if I were to spend pages in describing it I could not give you any idea of my dreariness, left alone down below, not allowed to help him or be near him while my father lay between living and dying. I could not do anything. I tried to read, but I could not read. To take up a novel, which was the only thing I could possibly have given my attention to, would have seemed like profanation at such a time. It would have been worse than reading a novel on Sunday, which I had always been brought up to think very wicked; and as for my dreams, they were worse even than the novels. I dared not carry them on while papa was so ill. I felt that if I allowed my thoughts to float away on such useless currents, I never could expect God to listen to my prayers. For this reason I made a dreadful effort to think "as one ought to think,"—to think of religious things always and all day long—and this was very difficult; but I made the effort, because I thought God was more likely to listen to me if I showed that I wanted to do well.

But, oh the dreary days and the dreary nights! The three last nights I sat up in my dressing-gown, and dozed drearily and woke still more drearily, after dreaming the strangest dreams. Sometimes I thought it was the wedding-day again, and he was standing with her hand on his arm; sometimes it was the anniversary, and he was saying how happy he was; sometimes it was a funeral. I dreamed always about him, and always in different aspects. One morning I woke up suddenly and found Ellen standing by me in the grey dawning. She did not say anything; the tears were running down her face. But I got up and followed her quite silent, knowing what it was.

He died, after a week's illness, in the morning, leaving us a whole horrible,

light, bright day to get through with what patience we could; and then there was a dreary interval of silence, and he was carried away from us for ever and ever; and she and I, two creatures of different minds as ever were born, with but this one link of union between us, were left in the house alone.

CHAPTER III.

SHE and I alone in the house! I do not think that I could express our desolation more fully were I to write a whole book. He who had brought us together was gone. The link between us was broken—we were two strangers, rather hostile to each other than otherwise. No pretence of love had ever existed between us. She had never had any occasion to be jealous of me; but she had known and must have felt that I was jealous of her, and grudged her her position, her happiness, her very name. She knew this, and it had not mattered to her so long as he was alive; but now that he was gone, now that she and I, bearing the same name, supposed to belong to each other, were left within our dismal house alone—

We went together to the funeral. I was too much absorbed in my own feelings, I believe, to think of her; and yet I noticed everything, as people do when they are deeply excited. She walked by herself, and so did I. There was no one to support either of us, and we did not cling to each other. The churchwardens were there, and Spicer the grocer, to my annoyance. When I saw him all the conversation which I had once overheard came to my mind. Even as I stood by my father's grave it came back to me. I understood it only partially, but it seemed to me as if the time had come on which he calculated, and which he had spoken of. I do not think it had ever recurred to me till that moment. She would be better off with a thousand pounds than with nothing. A thousand pounds—and ——— what had he said? I thought my heart had been too faint to feel at all, and yet it began to quicken now

with excitement. I looked at her as she walked before me. What was to become of her? What was to become of me? But I did not think of myself.

When we got back to the house Spicer came in and the churchwardens with him; they came into the parlour. When I was going away Mr. Turnham, who was one of them, called me back. "Miss Mary," he said, "wait a little. It is hard upon you, but there is some business to be settled. Pray come back."

I went, of course. She had dropped into the chair my father used to sit in. He had given it up to her when they were married, but now death had unmarried them, and I could not bear to see her there. Spicer had gone to sit by her; they were at one side of the room, Mr. Turnham and I at the other, as if we were opposite sides. The other churchwarden had shaken hands with us all and gone away.

"In the present melancholy circumstances it is our duty," said Mr. Turnham, "to inquire into our late dear friend's monetary arrangements; there must have been some settlement or other—some explanation at least, as he married so short a time ago."

Then Spicer cleared his throat, and edged still more on to the edge of his chair. Oh, heaven knows! I was as miserable as a girl could be—but yet I noticed all this as if I did not care.

"There was no settlement," he said, "reason good, there wasn't nothing to settle as was worth the while; but being Mrs. Peveril's only relation, and responsible like, he spoke very clear and honourable about his means to un. 'I ain't got no money, Mr. Spicer,' he said, 'but I've insured my life for my daughter, and I'll do as much for her. They'll have a thousand pounds apiece, and that's better than nothing,' he said; 'it will get them into some snug little way of business or something.' He was a sensible man, Mr. Peveril, and spoke up handsome when he saw as nothing was exacted of him. I don't know what office it's in, but I believe as what he said must be true."

"Perhaps if we were to adjourn into the study, and if one of the ladies would get the keys, we might look in his desk if there was a will," said Mr. Turnham. "I am very sorry that our late lamented friend had so short an illness, and therefore was unable to say anything as to what he wished."

"Stop, please," Mrs. Peveril said all at once. "Stop: neither of us is able to give you any help to-day; and afterwards we will try to manage for ourselves. We thank you very much, but it is best to leave us to ourselves. I speak for Mary too."

"But, my dear Mrs. Peveril, you will want some one to manage for you; it is painful, I know, but it is best to do it at once; you will want some one to manage——"

"I do not see the necessity," she said. She was dreadfully pale; I never saw any one so pale; and it went to my heart to be obliged to side with her, and acquiesce in what she said; but I could not help it, I was obliged to give in. She spoke for me too.

"As long as there's me, you may make your mind easy," said Spicer. "A relation; and on the premises, so to speak. I'll do for 'em all as is necessary; you may make your mind quite easy, Mr. Turnham—you trust to me."

Then she got up; her head drooped in her great heavy black bonnet and veil. She was not like a lily now, in all that crape; but I could not keep my eyes from her. She was not afraid of these men, as I was. She held out her hand first to the one, then to the other. "Good-bye," she said. "We thank you very much for taking so much interest, but we would like to be alone to-day. Good-bye."

Mr. Turnham got up not quite pleased, but he shook hands with her and then with me, and said "Good-bye and God bless you" to us both. "If you want me, you know where I am to be found," he said, with a little look of offence. Spicer stayed behind him, as if he belonged to us.

"I agree with you," he said, putting his hand on her shoulder. "Them as

is strangers has no business with your affairs. Trust 'em to me, my dear; trust 'em to me. When your money's safe in a good snug little business you won't be so badly off; at least it's always something to fall back upon;—don't you be downhearted, my dear. I don't see as you will be so badly off."

"Good-bye, Mr. Spicer," she said. She pushed past him and left the room with an impatience which I understood. He and I were left standing together, looking at each other. Nobody considered me much. It was the wife who was thought of—not the daughter. He shook his head as he looked after her.

"Bless us all! bless us all!" he said. "That's what comes of turning a woman's head. Miss Mary, I ain't going to forsake you, though she's far from civil. I'll stand by you, never fear. If the money's well invested you'll both get something'andsome. Nothing pays like business; and as there ain't no babby—which was what I always feared——"

"I don't want to talk about Mrs. Peveril," I said.

"Oh, you don't want to talk about her; nor me neither. She's very flighty and hoity-toighty. I remember when she was at least glad to get a corner at my table. She thinks she's set up now, with her thousand pounds. It's a blessing as there's no family. Miss Mary, I'll take your instructions next time as I comes if you'll put yourself in my hands. I've come to think on you as a relation too; but bless you, my dear, I know as you can't be cheerful with visitors not just the first day. Don't stand upon no ceremony with me."

He wanted me to leave him, I thought, that he might examine everything, and perhaps get at poor papa's papers; but I would not do that. I stayed, though my heart was bursting, until he went away. What an afternoon that was! it was summer, but it rained all day. It rained and rained into the smoky street, and upon papa's grave, which I seemed to see before me wet and cold and sodden, with little pools of water about. How heartless it seemed, how terrible, to have come into shelter our-

selves and to have left him there alone in the wet, and the cold, and the misery! If one could but have gone back there and sat down by him and got one's death, it would have been some consolation. I went up to my room and sat there drearily, watching the drops that chased each other down the window-panes. It was so wet that the street was quite silent outside, nobody coming or going, except the milkman with his pails making a clank at every area. There were no cries in the street, no sound of children playing, nothing but the rain pattering, pattering, upon the roofs and the pavement, and in every little hollow on both. The house, too, was perfectly still; there was no dinner, nothing to break the long monotony. Ellen came up in her new black gown, with tears on her cheeks, to bring me a glass of wine and a sandwich. I could not eat, but I drank the wine. "Oh, Miss Mary," said Ellen, "won't you go to her now? There's only you two. It ain't a time, Miss—oh, it ain't a time to think on things as may have been unpleasant. And she's a taking on so, shut up in that room, as I think she'll die."

Why should she die any more than me? Why should she be more pitied than I was? I had lost as much, more than she had. She had known him but a short time, not two years; but he had been mine all my life. I turned my back upon Ellen's appeal, and she went away crying, shaking her head and saying I was unkind, I was not feeling. Oh, was not I feeling? How my head ached, how my heart swelled, how the sobs rose into my throat; I should have been glad could I have felt that it was likely I should die.

"Will you go down to tea, Miss Mary," Ellen said, coming back as the night began to fall. I was weary, weary of sitting and crying by myself; any change looked as if it must be better. I was cold and faint and miserable; and then there was in my mind a sort of curiosity to see how she looked, and if she would say anything—even to know what were to be the relations between

us now. I went down accordingly, down to the dark little parlour which, during all papa's illness, I had lived in alone. She was there, scarcely visible in the dark, crouching over a little fire which Ellen had lighted. It was very well-meant on Ellen's part, but the wood was damp, and the coals black, and I think it made the place look almost more wretched. She sat holding out her thin hands to it. The tea was on the table, and after I went in Ellen brought the candles. We did not say anything to each other. After a while she gave me some tea and I took it. She seemed to try to speak two or three times. I waited for her to begin. I could not say a word; and we had been thus for a long time mournfully seated together before she at last broke the silence. "Mary," she said, and then paused. I suppose it was because I was younger than she that I had more command of myself, and felt able to observe every little movement she made and every tone. I was so curious about her—anxious, I could not tell why, as to what she would do and say.

"Mary," she repeated, "we have never been very good friends, you and I; I don't know why this has been. I have not wished it—but we have not been very good friends."

"No."

"No; that is all you say? Could we not do any better now? When I came here first, I did not think I was doing you any wrong. I did not mean it as a wrong to you. Now we are two left alone in the world. I have no one, and you have no one. Could we not do any better? Mary, I think it would please *him*, perhaps, if we tried to be friends."

My heart was quite full. I could have thrown myself upon her and kissed her. I could have killed her. I did not know what to do.

"We have never been enemies," I said.

"No. But friends—that is different. There never were two so lonely. If we stayed together we might get to be fond of each other, Mary; we might keep together out of the cold world. Two

together are stronger than one alone. You don't know how cold the world is, you are so young. If we were to keep together we might stay—at home."

Some evil spirit moved me, I cannot tell how; it seemed to me that I had found her out, that it was this she wanted. I got up from my chair flaming with the momentary hot passion of grief. "If there is any money for me, and if you want that, you can have it," I cried, and tried to go away.

She gave a little moaning cry, as if I had struck her. "Oh, Mary, Mary!" she cried, with a wailing voice more of sorrow than of indignation; and then she put out her hand and caught my dress. I could not have got away if I had wished, and I did not wish it, for I was devoured by curiosity about what she would do and say. This curiosity was the beginning of interest, though I did not know it; it fascinated me to her. She caught my dress and drew me closer. She put her other hand on mine, and drew me down to her, so that my face approached hers. She put up her white cheek, her eyes all hollowed out with crying, to mine: "Mary," she said, in a heartrending tone, "do not go away from me. I have nobody but you in the world." Then she paused. "I am going to have a baby," she said all at once, with a low, sharp cry.

I was confounded. I do not know what I said or did. Shame, wonder, pity, emotion—all mingled in me. I was very young, younger in heart than I was in years; and to have such a thing told to me overwhelmed me with shame and awe. It was so wonderful, so mysterious, so terrible. I dropped on my knees beside her, and covered my face with my hands, and cried. I could not resist any longer, or shut myself up. We cried together, clinging to each other, weeping over our secret. *He* had not known. At the last, when she was aware herself, she would not tell him to add to his pains. "He will know in heaven, Mary," she said, winding her arms round me, weeping on my shoulder, shaking me, frail support as I was, with her sobs. This was how the other

Mary and I became one. We were not without comfort as we crept upstairs, with our pale faces. She went with me to my room; she would not let me go. I had to hold her hand even when we went to sleep. "Do not leave me, Mary; stay with me, Mary," she moaned, whenever I stirred. And we slept by snatches, in our weariness; slept and woke to sob, and then slept again.

CHAPTER IV.

THIS union, following so close upon our complete severance from each other, astonished everybody. We frightened Ellen. When she came to call me next morning, and saw the other sleeping by me, she thought it was witchcraft; but I did not mind that. I rose, and dressed very quietly, not to wake *her*. She was sleeping deeply at last, the sleep of exhaustion. During all papa's illness she had not rested at all, and at last sorrow and watching had worn her out. But I need not go over at length everything that happened. We told kind Mrs. Tufnell and Mrs. Stephens, our nearest neighbours; and I believe they told it to many in the parish; but Mary and I neither knew nor heard what went on out of our house. I had got to call her Mary, as he did; I liked it now—it no longer seemed to interfere with me. I thought my voice sounded round and soft like his when I said her name—Mary. It is a pleasant name to say, though it is my own. I got to admire it, being hers—I, who had hated her for being so called. But all that was changed now.

I do not quite know how our business was settled, for I know nothing about business. This I know, that she managed it all herself, as she had said; she would not let Spicer have anything to do with it. She wrote about the money to an old friend of papa's, and got it invested and all settled. Half was for her and half for me. It brought us in about 85*l.* a year. We settled to let the first floor, two rooms furnished as a

sitting-room and bed-room, which would pay our rent; and we got three or four little pupils, who came every day, and whom we taught. Everything was very closely calculated, but we decided that we could manage it. We had never been used to be rich, neither one nor the other; and though when all was well I had dreamed of going away among strangers, yet now I could not help chiming in with that desperate desire of hers to avoid separation and remain together. She used to tell me stories of how she had been when she was a governess. How she had lived upstairs in a schoolroom alone in the midst of a great houseful of people; how when she came downstairs she was in the society without belonging to it; and how when any one in the family was kind to her they got into trouble. What she said was quite vague, but it was not comfortable; and by degrees my dreams and ideas were modified by her experience. But I could not be cured of my follies all in a moment, even by grief. After a while I began to dream again; and now my dreams were of my high estate being discovered somehow when I was seated lonely in that schoolroom, trying to get through the weary evening. I used to make a picture to myself of how the lady of the house would come penitent and ashamed, and make a hundred apologies; and how I would say to her, that though her other governesses might not turn out to be Lady Marys, yet did not she think it would be best to be kind and make friends of them? Lady Mary! I clung to my absurdity, though I began to be old enough to see how ridiculous it was. How could I ever turn out to be anybody now—now that papa was gone? But when a girl is but sixteen there are often a great many follies in her head which she would be deeply ashamed of if any one knew them, but which please her in secret as she dreams over them. My life was altogether changed by papa's death. It is dreadful to say so, but it was not changed for the worse. Perhaps I had been happier in the old days before Mary was ever heard of,

when he and I used to sit together, not talking much, and walk together, thinking our own thoughts—together, yet without much intercourse. I had been quite content then, having enough to amuse me in my own fancies, as he, I supposed, had in his. But now I began to be able to understand why he had wearied for real companionship, now that I knew what real companionship was. We lived together, Mary and I, in a different way. We talked over everything together; the smallest matter that occurred, we discussed it, she and I. She had the art of working everything that happened, into our life, so that the smallest incident was of importance. Even in those very first days, though her heart was broken, she soothed me. "Mary," she said, with her lips trembling, "we cannot be always crying; we must think of something else whenever we can; we must *try* to think of other things. God help us; we must live, we cannot die." And then she would break down; and then dry her eyes, and talk of something, of anything. When we got our little pupils, that was a relief. She went into her work with all her heart. Her attention never seemed to wander from the business, as mine constantly did. We had four little girls; they came for two hours in the morning and two in the afternoon. When they went away we had our walk. In the evening we did our needlework, and she made me read aloud, or sometimes play, and she taught me to sing. We used to stop and cry at every second bar when we began, but by degrees that hysterical feeling passed off. I was never away from her. I had constant companionship, communion,—talk that kept me interested, and even amused. I got to be—I am almost ashamed to confess it—happier than I had been for a long time, perhaps than I had ever been in my life.

We had lived like this for about three months, and had got used to it, when something came to make a little change. Mary and I rarely spoke of our secret. It seemed to be my secret as well as

hers, and I tried all I could to take care of her, with a secret awe which I never expressed. I could not have spoken of it; I should have been ashamed; but the mysterious sense of what was coming was always in my mind. The needlework which we used to do in the evenings filled me with strange feelings. I never dared ask what this or that was for. I was afraid and abashed at the very sight of the little things when they happened to be spread out and showed their form. It was making them which made me a good needlewoman: perhaps you will think that is of no great importance in these days of sewing-machines; but oh, to have let a sewing-machine, or even a stranger's hand, touch those dearest little scraps of linen and muslin! Nothing but the finest work, the daintiest little stitches, would do for them. I used to kiss them sometimes in my awe, but I would not have asked questions for the world. This is a digression, however; for what I was going to say had nothing to do either with our work or our secret. All this time we had not let our first floor—and it was with great satisfaction in her looks that Mrs. Stephens came in one day and told us that she had heard of a lodger for us. "He is a gentleman, my dears," she said, "*quite* a gentleman, and therefore you may be sure he will give no trouble that he can help. He is an engineer, and has something to do, I believe, about the new railway; otherwise he lives at home somewhere about Hyde Park, and moves in the very best society. When I say an 'engineer,' I mean a 'civil' one, you know, which is, I am told, quite the profession of a gentleman. He will want the rooms for six months, or perhaps more. His name is Durham; he is cousin to the Pophams, great friends of mine, and if the lodgings suit him he would like to come in at once."

Mary had given a little start, I could not tell why. There seemed no reason for it. Her work had fallen out of her hands; but she picked it up again and went on. "His name is—— What

did you say, Mrs. Stephens?—a civil engineer?"

"Yes, my love, a civil engineer—Durham, his name is. He will come with me to-morrow, if you are agreeable, to see the rooms."

Mary made a visible pause. She looked at me as if she were consulting me; it was a curious, appealing sort of look. I looked back at her, but I could not understand her. What did I know about Mr. Durham, the civil engineer? Mrs. Stephens was not so observant as I was, and probably she never noticed this look. And then Mary said, "Very well. If they suit him, we ought to be very thankful. I should have preferred a lady——"

"My dear, a lady is a great deal more at home than a man, and gives more trouble," said Mrs. Stephens; "very different from a man who is out all day. And then, probably he will dine almost always at his West-end home."

The idea was funny, and I laughed. The notion of the West-end home amused me; but I could not help observing that Mary, who was always ready to sympathize with me, did not smile. Her head was bent over her work. She did not even say anything more on the subject, but let Mrs. Stephens go on and make all the arrangements for coming next day. I thought of this after; and even at the time I noticed it, and with some surprise.

Next day, just as we were going out for our walk, Mary, who had been at the window, started back, and went hurriedly into the little room behind, which had once been papa's study. "Mary," she said, "there is Mrs. Stephens and——her friend. Go with them, please, to see the rooms. I am not quite well: I would rather not appear."

"I am so stupid; I shall not know what to say," I began.

"You will do very well," said Mary, and disappeared and shut the door. I had no time to think more of this, for the stranger came in directly with Mrs. Stephens; and in my shyness I blushed

and stammered while I explained. "She is not very well," I said; "I am to show you. Will you please—sit down; will you come upstairs?"

"You will do very well," said Mrs. Stephens, patting me on the shoulder. "This is Mr. Durham, Mary, and I don't think he will eat any of us. It is a nice light, airy staircase," she said, as she went up, not to lose any opportunity of commending the house. "A capital staircase," said Mr. Durham, with a cheery laugh. I had scarcely ventured to look at him yet, but somehow there was a feeling of satisfactoriness diffused through the air about him. I cannot explain quite what I mean, but I am sure others must have felt the same thing. Some people seem to make the very air pleasant: they give you a sense that all is well, that there is nothing but what is good and honest in the place where they are. This is what I felt now; and when we got upstairs I ventured to look at him. He was tall and strong and ruddy, not at all like any hero whom I had ever read of or imagined. There was nothing "interesting" about him. He looked "a good fellow," cheery, and smiling, and active, and kind. He settled at once about the rooms. He laughed out when Mrs. Stephens said something about their homeliness. "They are as good as a palace," he said; "I don't see what a man could want more." The sitting-room was the room papa died in, and it cost me a little pang to see them walking about and looking at the furniture; but when people are poor they cannot indulge such feelings. We learn to say nothing about them, and perhaps that helps to subdue them. At all events, I made no show of what I was thinking, and it was all settled in a few minutes. He was to come in on Saturday, and Ellen was to work for him and wait upon him. I could not help thinking it would be pleasant to have him in the house.

And thus there commenced another period of my life, which I must speak of very briefly,—which indeed I do not

care to speak of at all, but which I will think about as long as I live. I did not see very much of him at first. I was nearly seventeen now, and very shy; and Mary watched over me, and took great pains not to expose me to chance meetings with the stranger, or any unnecessary trouble. Ellen managed everything between us. She was a good, trustworthy woman, and we did not require to interfere; she was full of praises of Mr. Durham, who never gave any trouble he could help. But one night, when I was taking tea with Mrs. Stephens, he happened to come in, and we had the pleasantest evening. He knew a song I had just learned, and sang a second to it in the most delightful deep voice. He talked and rattled about everything, He made Mrs. Stephens laugh and he made me laugh, and he told us his adventures abroad till we were nearly crying. When it was time for me to go, he got up too, and said he would go with me. "Oh, it is only next door; I can go alone," I said, in my shyness. "It is only next door, but I live there too, and I am going to work now," he said. "To work! when all the rest of the world are going to bed?" said Mrs. Stephens; "you will make yourself ill." How he laughed at that! his laugh sounded like a cheery trumpet. He did not mean to kill himself with work. "But I hope you will let me come to tea again," he said. How pleased Mrs. Stephens was! She always says she likes young people, and we had spent such a pleasant night.

Many more of these pleasant evenings followed. Sometimes when we were sitting quiet after tea, she would send for me suddenly; sometimes she would write a little note in the afternoon. This expectation filled my life with something quite new. I had never had many invitations or pleasures before: I had never expected them. When we sat down to work after tea I had known that it was for the whole evening, and that no pleasant interruption would disturb us. But now a little thrill of excitement ran through my whole life.

I wondered, would a note come in the afternoon? If it did not come, I wondered whether the bell would ring after tea, and Ellen come in saying, "If you please, ma'am, Mrs. Stephens's compliments, and would Miss Mary go in, and take her music?" Mary never interfered; never said "Don't go." She looked at me sometimes very wistfully; sometimes she smiled and shook her head at me, and said I was getting dissipated. Once or twice she looked anxious, and told me a story, which I only half understood, of girls who met with people they liked, and were very happy, and then lost sight of them ever after. Mary was very clever at telling stories, and I was fond of listening; but she did it so well and delicately that I fear I never thought of the moral—never, at least, till all the harm was done and it was too late.

I would not have any one think, however, that Mr. Durham either meant or did any harm. To say so would be very wrong. It was as imperceptible with him as with me. He went quite innocently, as I did, to cheer up Mrs. Stephens, and because an evening's chatter with a little music was pleasant; and by degrees we thought less and less of Mrs. Stephens and more and more of each other. If any one meant anything beyond this, it was she who was the guilty person. She would nod off to sleep in her easy-chair while we were talking. She would say with a sleepy smile, "Don't mind me, my dears. The light is a little strong for my eyes. That is why I close them—but I like the sound of your voices even when I don't hear what you say." Alas, if she had heard everything that had been said it might have been better. After a while he began to say strange things to me while she had her doze. He talked about his family to me. He said he hoped I should know them some day. He said his mother was very kind and wise—"a wise woman." These were the very words he used. And then he said—other things; but that was not till the very, very last.

One morning we met in the little

hall. It was raining, and it was a holiday, and when he insisted on following me into the schoolroom, what could I do—I could not shut him out. He seemed to fill the whole room, and make it warm and bright. I do not think we had ever been quite alone before. He came to the window and stood there looking out upon the bare bit of smoky grass and the water-butt. And then all at once he came to me and took my hand. "If I had a nice little house out in the country, with flowers and trees about it, a bright little house—Mary—would you come and be my little wife, and take care of it and me?"

Oh, what a thing to have said to you, all at once, without warning, in the heart of your own dull little life, when you thought you were to work, and pinch, and put up with things, for ever! It was different from my old fancy. But how poor a thing to have been found out to be Lady Mary in comparison with this! What I said is neither here nor there. We stood together in the little old study, among the forms where we had our little scholars, as if we had been in a fairy palace. I was not seventeen. I had no experience. I thought of nothing but him, and what he said. It was not my part to think of his father and mother, and what he would do, and what he wouldn't do. He was a great deal older than I was; about thirty, I believe. Of course, I thought of nothing but him.

"Do you know," he said after a long time, "I have never seen your step-mother, Mary? I have been three months in the house, and I have never seen her. I must go and see her now."

"Oh, wait a little," I said; "wait a day. Let us have a secret all to ourselves one day." How foolish I was!—but how was I to know?

He consented after a while; and then he made me promise to bring her out at a certain hour in the afternoon, that he might meet us at the door and see her. I made all the arrangements for this with a light heart. Though it was very difficult to hide from her what had happened, I did so with a great effort. I persuaded her to come out earlier than

usual. She did not resist me. She was kinder, more tender, than I had ever known. She began to say something of a story she had to tell me as we went out. I went first and opened the door, and stood aside on the white steps to let her go out. Her crape veil was thrown back. Though she was still pale, there was a tint of life upon her cheeks. She was more like herself in her refined, delicate beauty, more like a lily, my favourite image of her, than she had been for ever so long.

I had begun to smile to myself at the success of our trick, when suddenly I got frightened, I could scarcely tell how. Looking up, I saw him standing on the pavement gazing at her, confounded. I can use no other word. He looked bewildered, confused, half wild with amazement. As for Mary, she had stopped short on the step. She was taken strangely by surprise too; for the first moment she only gazed as he did. Then she dropped her veil, and stepped back into the house. "I have forgotten something," she said; and turned round and went upstairs to her room. He came in, too, and went upstairs after her, passing without looking at me. His under lip seemed to have dropped; his cheerful face had lost all its animation; his eyes had a wild, bewildered stare in them. What did it mean? oh! what did it mean?

I did not know what to do. I wondered if he had followed her to speak to her, or what was the meaning of those strange looks. I lingered in the hall holding the handle of the door, feeling miserable, but not knowing why. In two or three minutes she came downstairs. "I had forgotten my handkerchief," she said; and we went out together as if nothing had happened. But something had happened, that was certain. She did not talk very much that day. When we were coming home she said to me, quite suddenly, "Was it your doing, Mary, that I met Mr. Durham so at the door?"

"He said it was so strange he had never seen you," I said.

"Yes, but you should have known I

would not do that for nothing. You should not have been the one to betray me, Mary. I knew Mr. Durham once. He is associated with one of the most painful portions of my life."

"Oh, Mary dear! I did not know—"

"You did not know, and I did not want you to find out; but never mind, it is done. It need not, I hope, do any harm to you."

That was a very strange day: the excitement of the morning, and then the other excitement; and to feel that I had a secret from her, and that he was seated upstairs giving no sign, taking no notice of our existence all day long. I was so agitated and disturbed that I did not know what to do. At last I settled myself in the schoolroom to do some translations. When one has been looking for a long time for a holiday, and something happens to spoil the holiday when it comes, it is worse even than if that something had happened on an ordinary day. I think Mary was glad to be left to herself, for instead of our ordinary companionship, she sat in the parlour at work all the long afternoon, and I in the schoolroom. One of the doors was half opened between us. She could hear my pen scratching on the paper, and the rustling of the leaves of my dictionary—and I could hear her moving softly over her work. It was autumn by this time, and the days were growing short, and neither of us cared to ring for tea; and I think Ellen was cooking dinner for Mr. Durham and forgot us at the usual hour. We still sat as we had been all the afternoon when the twilight came on. I laid down my pen, having no light to write by, when I heard some one knock softly at the parlour door.

Mary made no reply. She sat quite still, never stirring. The knock came again; then I, too, put my paper away from me and listened. The door opened, and some one came into the parlour. How well I knew who it was! I listened now so intently that nothing escaped me. How could it be wrong? He must have come to talk to her of me.

"Mary!" he said. I rose up softly in my excitement, thinking it was me he was calling; but before I could move further a strange consciousness came over me that it was not me he meant. The old feeling with which I had heard my father call Mary came into my very soul—but worse, a hundred times worse. Oh, had he too another Mary besides me?

"Mary!" he said, breathless, and then paused. "How has all this come about? Why do I find you here? What does it mean? There are many explanations which I have a right to ask. You disappear from me—sent away—I know not how; and then—not to count the years that have passed—after these three months, in which you must have known me, I find you by chance—"

She knew that I was within hearing, and that whatever she said to him must be to me too. If that was a restraint upon her, I cannot tell. I felt sorry for her vaguely in my mind; but yet I did not move.

"I did not wish you to find me at all," she said, very low. "Mr. Durham, there is and can be nothing between you and me."

"Nothing!" he said; "what do you mean, Mary? Why there is all the past between us—a hundred things that cannot be undone by anything in the future. You know how many things there are connected with you which are a mystery to me—things not affecting you alone, but others. How you went away, for instance? and what became of you, and how much my mother had to do with it? You must have known the moment I found you that all these questions remained to be asked."

"All these questions," she said, "are made quite unimportant by two things. First, that I am the wife, though now the widow, of a man I loved dearly—and that you have begun to love, begun to think of some one very different from me."

"Ah!" he said, with a strange brief utterance of distress. Whether he was grieved to think of the wrong he was doing me, or whether the strange posi-

tion he stood in troubled him, I cannot tell; but there was pain in the cry he gave—"ah!" with a little shiver. "You have abundance of power to pain me," he said, very low, "but it seems strange you should upbraid me. Yes, I have begun to think of some one else; but that does not prevent me from being deeply startled, deeply moved, by the sight of you."

There was a little silence then, and I came to myself slowly. I woke as it were out of a trance. She knew I was there, but he did not. I had no right to hear his secrets without warning him. I tried to get up, but could not at first. I felt stiff and weary, as if I had been travelling for days together. I could scarcely drag myself up from my chair. The sound I made in rising might have warned him, but I do not think he heard. Before I could drag myself to the door and show I was there, he had begun again.

"Mary," he said, lingering upon the name as if he loved it, "this is not a time for recrimination. Tell me how you left Chester-street, and what my mother had to do with it? and then, if you choose, I will never see you again."

"Is it for your mother, or for me?"

I did not hear the answer. I could not stay longer. I got to the door somehow, and threw it open. I was too much bewildered to know what I was doing, or to think. I came out with a little rush as feeble creatures do. "I want to get away. I want to go out. I cannot stay there all day and hear you talking," I said. I was not addressing either her or him. The sound of my voice must have been very piteous, for I remember it even now.

"Mary!" he said.

Oh, what a difference in the sound! This time his voice was startled, pained, almost harsh, with a kind of reproof in it: not as he said Mary to her. Oh, papa, papa! it was you first who taught me the difference. I gave a hoarse little cry. I could not speak. Millions of words seemed to rush to my lips, but I could not say any of them. "I have been here long enough," I managed to

stammer out. "Let me go—let me go!" Next moment I was in the dark, in the silence, in my own little room, kneeling down by the bedside, crying and moaning to myself. I did not know why. I had heard nothing wrong; but it seemed to me that all my life was over, and that it did not matter what came next.

And, indeed, I cannot tell what came next. She came up to me, and told me the whole story, and in a vague sort of way I understood it. She was not to blame. He had been fond of her (everybody was fond of her) when she was the governess in his mother's house; and it had been found out, and his mother was harsh, and she had gone suddenly away. There was nothing in this which need have made me unhappy, perhaps—so people have said to me since—but then I was very young; and I had been happy—and now I was miserable. I listened to her, and made no answer, but only moaned. The night passed, I cannot tell how. I did not sleep till late in the morning; and then I fell asleep and did not wake till noon. Then what was the use of going downstairs? I stayed in my room, feeling so weary, so worn out. It was Saturday, a half-holiday, and there was nothing to do. She came to me and spoke to me again, and again; but I gave her very little answer. And he took no notice—he sent no message, no letter—not a word of explanation. He never asked my pardon. In my misery I thought I heard voices all the day as if they were talking, talking—and he never sent a message or note or anything to me. And then after a long talk, as I fancied, with him, she would come to me. "Mary, this must not be. You must get up. You must be like yourself. Neither Mr. Durham nor I have done you any wrong, Mary."

"Oh, don't call me Mary!" I said: "call me some other name. If you knew how different it sounds when it is said to you, not to me."

And then she would look at me with her eyes full of tears, and sit down by me, and say no more. And so passed this bitter day.

CHAPTER V.

NEXT day was Sunday. When I woke up, early, I recollected all that had happened with a flush of overwhelming shame. How childishly, how foolishly I had behaved. I was very, very wretched; but I was ashamed, and pride got the upper hand. I dressed myself carefully and went downstairs, resolved not to show my misery at least, to be proud and forget it. "If he does not care for me," I said to myself, "I will not care for him." I passed his room very softly that I might not wake him. There was early morning service in St. Mark's now, for the curate who had succeeded poor papa was very High Church. I stole out and went to this early service, and tried to be good, and to give myself up to God's will. Yes, it must have been God's will—though how it could ever be God's will that anybody should be false, or unkind, or cruel, I could not tell. I know it is right, however, whatever happens that vexes you, to accept it as if it must be the will of God. I tried to do that, and I was not quite so miserable when I went home. Ellen opened the door to me, looking frightened. "I thought you was lost, too, Miss," she said. "I have been to church," I answered, scarcely noticing her words. Breakfast was laid in the little parlour. It was very, very tidy, dreadfully tidy—everything was cleared away—the basket with the work and all the little things, and every stray thread and remnant. All of a sudden it occurred to me how little I had been doing to help of late. Instead of working I had been spending the evenings with Mrs. Stephens. I did not even know how far the "things" were advanced, and it seemed strange they should all be gone. Of course it was because of Sunday. After a while Ellen brought in the coffee. She had still the same frightened look. "Missis wasn't with you at the early service, Miss Mary?" "Oh no," I said, surprised at the question; "perhaps she is not up."

"She's never lain down all night,"

said Ellen; "she was worried and worn off her legs going up and down to you yesterday Miss—you that was quite well, and had no call to your bed. She was a deal more like it, the dear. She's never lain in her bed this blessed night, and I can't find her, high or low."

I scarcely waited to hear this out, but rushed up to her room. The bed had not been touched since yesterday. A little prayer-book lay on it, as if she had been praying. The room was in perfect good order—no litter about it. The little "things" were not to be seen. One of her dresses hanging against the wall made me think for a moment she was there, but it was only an old dress, and everything else was gone. Oh the terror and the pain and the wonder of that discovery! I could not believe it. I rushed through all the house, every room, calling her. Mr. Durham heard me, and came out to the door of his room and spoke to me as I passed, and tried to take my hand, but I snatched it away from him. I did not even think of him. I can just remember the look he had, half-ashamed, appealing with his eyes, a little abashed and strange. I scarcely saw him at the time—but I remember him now, and with good reason, for I have never seen him again.

And I have never seen Mary again from that day. Mrs. Stephens came in to me, startled by the news her servants had carried her; and she told me she had heard a carriage drive off late on the previous night, but did not think it was from our door. She knew nothing. She cried, but I could not cry; and it was Sunday, and nothing could be done—nothing! even if I had known what to do. I rushed to Spicer's, and then I was sorry I had gone, for such people as they are never understand, and they thought, and think to this day, that there was something disgraceful in it. I rushed to Mrs. Tufnell, not expecting to find her, for now it was time for church. The bells had done ringing, and I had already met, as I walked wildly along, almost all the people I knew. One woman stopped me and asked if Mrs. Peveril was taken

ill, and if she should go to her. "Poor thing, poor thing!" this good woman said. Oh, she might well pity us—both of us! But to my surprise Mrs. Tufnell was at home. She almost looked as if she expected me. She looked agitated and excited, as if she knew. Did she know? I have asked her on my knees a hundred times, but she has always shaken her head. "How should I know?" she has said, and cried. I have thought it over and over for days and for years, till my brain has whirled. But I think she does know—I think some time or other she will tell me. It is a long time ago, and my feelings have got a little dulled; but I think some time or other I must find it out.

This wonderful event made a great change in my life. I began at once, that very day, to live with Mrs. Tufnell in the Square. She would not let me go home. She kissed me, and said I was to stay with her now. Mr. Durham came twice and asked to see me; but I could not bear to see him. Then Mrs. Stephens came with a letter. He said in it that I must dispose of him; that he was in my hands, and would do whatever I pleased; that he had been startled more than he could say by the sudden sight of one whom he had loved before he knew me; but that if I could forgive him any foolish words he might have said, then he hoped we might be happy. In short, he was very honourable, ready to keep his word; and I felt as if I hated him for his virtue—for treating me "honourably!" Was that what all his love and all my happiness had come to? I sent him a very short little note back, and it was all over. He went abroad soon after, and I have never heard of him any more.

And thus my story ended at seventeen. I wonder if there are many lives with one exciting chapter in them, ending at seventeen, and then years upon years of monotonous life. I am twenty-three now. I live with Mrs. Tufnell. I am daily governess to one little girl, and I have my forty pounds a-year, the interest of poor papa's insurance money. I am very well off indeed, and some people think I need not care to take a pupil at all—better off, a great deal, than I was in Southampton-street;—but how different! I heard very soon after that Mary had a little boy. It was in the papers, but without any address; and I had one letter from her, saying that we had made a mistake in trying to live together, and that she was sorry. She hoped I would forgive her if she had been mistaken, and she would always think of me and love me. Love me? Is it like love to go away and leave me alone? Two people have said they loved me in my life, and that is what both have done.

However, after that letter I could not do anything more. If she thought it was a mistake for us to live together, of course it was a mistake. And I had my pride too. "I always felt it was a doubtful experiment," Mrs. Tufnell said when people wondered, "and it did not answer—that was all." And this is how it was settled and ended—ended, I suppose, for ever. Mrs. Tufnell is very good to me, and as long as she lives I am sure of a home. Perhaps I may tell you her story one of these days; for she has a story, like most people. She tells me I am still very young, and may yet have a life of my own; but in the meantime the most I can do is to take an interest in other people's lives.

To be continued.

DEVELOPMENT IN DRESS.

THE development of dress presents a strong analogy to that of organisms, as explained by the modern theories of evolution; and in this article I propose to illustrate some of the features which they have in common. We shall see that the truth expressed by the proverb, "*Natura non facit saltum*," is applicable in the one case as in the other; the law of progress holds good in dress, and forms blend into one another with almost complete continuity. In both cases a form yields to a succeeding form, which is better adapted to the then surrounding conditions; thus, when it ceased to be requisite that men in active life should be ready to ride at any moment, and when riding had for some time ceased to be the ordinary method of travelling, knee breeches and boots yielded to trousers. The "Ulster Coat," now so much in vogue, is evidently largely fostered by railway travelling, and could hardly have flourished in the last century, when men either rode or travelled in coaches, where there was no spare room for any very bulky garment.

A new invention bears a kind of analogy to a new variation in animals; there are many such inventions, and many such variations; those that are not really beneficial die away, and those that are really good become incorporated by "natural selection," as a new item in our system. I may illustrate this by pointing out how macintosh-coats and crush-hats have become somewhat important items in our dress.

Then, again, the degree of advancement in the scale of dress may be pretty accurately estimated by the extent to which various "organs" are specialized. For example, about sixty years ago, our present evening-dress was the ordinary dress for gentlemen; top-boots, always worn by old-fashioned "John Bull" in *Punch's* cartoons, are now reserved for the hunting-field; and that the red coat was formerly only a best coat, appears from

the following observations of "a Lawyer of the Middle Temple," in No. 129 of the *Spectator*:—"Here (in Cornwall) we fancied ourselves in Charles II.'s reign,—the people having made little variations in their dress since that time. The smartest of the country squires appear still in the Monmouth cock; and when they go awooing (whether they have any post in the militia or not) they put on a red coat."¹

But besides the general adaptation of dress above referred to, there is another influence which has perhaps a still more important bearing on the development of dress, and that is fashion. The love of novelty, and the extraordinary tendency which men have to exaggerate any peculiarity, for the time being considered a mark of good station in life, or handsome in itself, give rise I suppose to fashion. This influence bears no distant analogy to the "sexual selection," on which so much stress has recently been laid in the "Descent of Man." Both in animals and dress, remnants of former stages of development survive to a later age, and thus preserve a tattered record of the history of their evolution.

These remnants may be observed in two different stages or forms. 1st. Some parts of the dress have been fostered and exaggerated by the selection of fashion, and are then retained and crystallized, as it were, as part of our dress, notwithstanding that their use is entirely gone (*e.g.* the embroidered pocket-flaps in a court uniform, now sewn fast to the coat). 2ndly. Parts originally useful have ceased to be of any service, and have been handed down in an atrophied condition.

The first class of cases have their analogue in the peacock's tail, as explained by sexual selection; and the second in the wing of the apteryx, as explained by the effects of disuse.

¹ See p. 356 of Fairholt's "Costume in England:" London, 1846.

Of the second kind of remnant Mr. Tylor gives very good instances when he says:¹ "The ridiculous little tails of the German postilion's coat show of themselves how they came to dwindle to such absurd rudiments; but the English clergyman's bands no longer convey their history to the eye, and look unaccountable enough till one has seen the intermediate stages through which they came down from the more serviceable wide collars, such as Milton wears in his portraits, and which gave their name to the 'band-box' they used to be kept in." These collars are curiously enough worn to this day by the choristers of Jesus College, Cambridge.

According to such ideas as these it becomes interesting to try to discover the marks of descent in our dresses, and in making this attempt many things apparently meaningless may be shown to be full of meaning.

Women's dress retains a general similarity from age to age, together with a great instability in details, and therefore does not afford so much subject for remark as does men's dress. I propose, therefore, to confine myself almost entirely to the latter, and to begin at the top of the body, and to work downwards through the principal articles of clothing.

HATS.—Hats were originally made of some soft material, probably of cloth or leather, and in order to make them fit the head, a cord was fastened round them, so as to form a sort of contraction. This is illustrated on p. 524 of Fairholt's "Costume in England," in the figure of the head of an Anglo-Saxon woman, wearing a hood bound on with a head-band; and on p. 530 are figures of several hats worn during the fourteenth century, which were bound to the head by rolls of cloth; and all the early hats seem provided with some sort of band. We may trace the remnants of this cord or band in the present hat-band. A similar survival may be observed in the strings of the

Scotch-cap, and even in the mitre of the bishop.¹

It is probable that the hat-band would long ago have disappeared had it not been made use of for the purpose of hiding the seam joining the crown to the brim. If this explanation of the retention of the hat-band is the true one, we have here a part originally of use for one purpose applied to a new one, and so changing its function; a case which has an analogy to that of the development of the swimming-bladders of fishes, used to give them lightness in the water, into the lungs of mammals and birds, used as the furnace for supporting animal heat.

The duties of the hat-band have been taken in modern hats by two running strings fastened to the lining, and these again have in their turn become obsolete, for they are now generally represented by a small piece of string, by means of which it is no longer possible to make the hat fit the head more closely.

The ancestor from which our present chimney-pot hat takes most of its characteristics is the broad-brimmed low-crowned hat, with an immense plume falling down on to the shoulder, which was worn during the reign of Charles II.² At the end of the seventeenth, and during the eighteenth century, this hat was varied by the omission of the plume, and by giving of the brim various "cocks." That these "cocks" were formerly merely temporary is shown by Hogarth's picture of Hudibras beating Sidrophel and his man Whacum, where there is a hat, the brim of which is buttoned up in front to the crown with three buttons. This would be a hat of the seventeenth century. Afterwards, during the eighteenth century, the brim was bent up in two or three places, and notwithstanding that these "cocks" became permanent, yet the hats still retained the marks of their origin in the button and strap on the right side. The cockade, I imagine, took its name from its being a badge worn on one of the "cocks."

¹ For the origin of this curious head-dress, see Fairholt, p. 564.

² See Fairholt, p. 540.

The modern cocked-hat, apparently of such an anomalous shape, proves, on examination, to be merely a hat of the shape above referred to ; it appears further that the right side was bent up at an earlier date than the left, for the hat is not symmetrical, and the "cock" on the right side forms a straight crease in the (quondam) brim, and that on the left is bent rather over the crown, thus making the right side of the hat rather straighter than the left. The hat-band here remains in the shape of two gold tassels, which are just visible within the two points of the cocked-hat.

A bishop's hat shows the transition from the three-cocked hat to our present chimney-pot ; and because sixty years ago beaver-fur was the fashionable material for hats, we must now needs wear a silken imitation, which could deceive no one into thinking it fur, and which is bad to resist the effects of weather. Even in a lady's bonnet the elements of brim, crown, and hat-band may be traced.

The "busby" of our hussars affords a curious instance of survival. It would now appear to be merely a fancy head-dress, but on inspection it proves not to be so. The hussar was originally a Hungarian soldier, and he brought his hat with him to our country. I found the clue to the meaning of the hat in a picture of a Hungarian peasant. He wore a red night-cap, something like that worn by our brewers' men, or by a Sicilian peasant, but the cap was edged with so broad a band of fur, that it made in fact a low "busby." And now in our hussars the fur has grown enormously, and the bag has dwindled into a flapping ornament, which may be detached at pleasure. Lastly, in the new "busby" of the Royal Engineers the bag has vanished, although the top of the cap (which is made of cloth and not of fur) is still blue, as was the bag formerly ; the top cannot, however, be seen, except from a bird's-eye point of view.

It appears that all cockades and plumes are worn on the left side of the hat, and this may, I think, be explained by the fact that a large plume, such as that worn in the time of Charles II., or

that of the modern Italian Bersaglieri, would impede the free use of the sword ; and this same explanation would also serve to show how it was that the right side of the hat was the first to receive a "cock." A London servant would be little inclined to think that he wears his cockade on the left side to give his sword-arm full liberty.

COATS.—Everyone must have noticed the nick in the folded collar of the coat and of the waistcoat ; this is of course made to allow for the buttoning round the neck, but it is in the condition of a rudimentary organ, for the nick would probably not come into the right place, and in the waistcoat at least there are usually neither the requisite buttons nor button-holes.

"The modern gentleman's coat may be said to take its origin from the *vest*, or long outer garment, worn towards the end of the reign of Charles II."¹ This vest seems to have had no gathering at the waist, and to have been buttoned all down the front, and in shape rather like a loose bag ; to facilitate riding it was furnished with a slit behind, which could be buttoned up at pleasure ; the button-holes were embroidered, and in order to secure similarity of embroidery on each side of the slit, the buttons were sewn on to a strip of lace matching the corresponding button-hole on the other side. These buttons and button-holes left their marks in the coats of a century later in the form of gold lacing on either side of the slit of the tails.

In about the year 1700, it began to be the fashion to gather in the vest or coat at the waist, and it seems that this was first done by two buttons near the hips being buttoned to loops rather nearer to the edge of the coat, and situated at about the level of the waist. Our soldiers much in the same manner now make a waist in their loose overcoats, by buttoning a short strap to two buttons, placed a considerable distance apart on the back.

This old fashion is illustrated in a figure dressed in the costume of 1696, in an old illustration of the "Tale of the

¹ Fairholt, p. 479.

Tub," and also in the figure of a dandy smelling a nosegay, in Hogarth's picture, entitled "Here Justice triumphs in his Easy Chair," &c., as well as elsewhere. Engravings of this transition period of dress are, however, somewhat rare, and it is naturally not common to be able to get a good view of the part of the coat under the arms. This habit of gathering in the waist will, I think, explain how it was that, although the buttons and button-holes were retained down the front edges, the coat came to be worn somewhat open in front.

The coat naturally fell in a number of plaits or folds below these hip buttons; but in most of Hogarth's pictures, although the buttons and plaits remain, yet the creases above the buttons disappear, and seams appear to run from the buttons up under the arms. It may be worth mentioning that in all such matters of detail Hogarth's accuracy is notorious, and that therefore his engravings are most valuable for the study of the dress of the period. At the end of the seventeenth, and at the beginning of the eighteenth centuries, coats seem very commonly to have been furnished with slits running from the edge of the skirt, up under the arms, and these were made to button up, in a manner similar in all respects to the slit of the tails. The sword was usually worn under the coat, and the sword-hilt came through the slit on the left side. Later on these slits appear to have been sewed up, and the buttons and button-holes died away, with the exception of two or three buttons just at the tops of the slits; thus in coats of about the year 1705, it is not uncommon to see several buttons clustered about the tops of all three slits. The buttons at the top of the centre slit entirely disappeared, but the two buttons now on the backs of our coats trace their pedigree up to those on the hips. Thus it is not improbable that although our present buttons represent those used for making the waist, as above explained, yet that they in part represent the buttons for fastening up these side slits.

The fold which we now wear below

the buttons on the back are the descendants of the falling plaits, notwithstanding that they appear as though they were made for, and that they are in fact commonly used as, the recesses for the tail-pockets; but that this was not their original object is proved by the fact that during the last century the pockets were either vertical or horizontal, placed a little in front of the two hip buttons (which have since moved round towards the back), and had highly embroidered flaps, buttons, and button-holes. The horizontal pockets may now be traced in the pocket-flaps of court dress before alluded to; and the vertical pocket is represented by some curious braiding and a row of buttons, which may be observed on the tails of the tunics of the foot-guards. The details of the manner in which this last rudiment became reduced to its present shape may be traced in books of uniforms, and one of the stages may now be frequently seen in the livery of servants, in the form of a row of three or four buttons running down near the edge of the tail, sewn on to a scalloped patch of cloth (the pocket-flap), which is itself sewed to the coat.

In the last century, when the coats had large flapping skirts, it became the custom (as may be seen in Hogarth's pictures) to button back the two corners of the coat, and also to button forward the inner corners, so as to separate the tails for convenience in riding.¹ This custom left its traces in the uniform of our soldiers down to the introduction of the modern tunic, and such traces may still be seen in some uniforms, for example, those of a Lord Lieutenant and of the French gendarmierie. In the uniforms of which I speak, the coats have swallow-tails, and these are broadly edged with a light-coloured border, tapering upwards and getting broader downwards; at the bottom of the tail, below where the borders join (at which joining there is usually a button), there

¹ It seems to have been in actual use in 1760, although not in 1794. See Cannon's "Hist. Rec. of Brit. Army" (London, 1837), the 2nd Dragoon Guards.

is a small triangle of the same colour as the coat, with its apex at this button. This curious appearance is explained thus:—the two corners, one of which is buttoned forwards and the other backwards, could not be buttoned actually to the edge of the coat, but had to be fastened a little inland as it were; and thus part of the coat was visible at the bottom of the tail: the light-coloured border, although sewn to the coat, evidently now represents the lining, which was shown by the corners being turned back.

It was not until the reign of George III. that coats were cut back at the waist, as are our present evening coats, but since, before that fashion was introduced, the coats had become swallow-tailed in the manner explained, it seems likely that this form of coat was suggested by the previous fashion. And, indeed, stages of development of a somewhat intermediate character may be observed in old engravings. In the uniforms of the last century the coats were double-breasted, but were generally worn open, with the flaps thrown back and buttoned to rows of buttons on the coat. These flaps, of course, showed the lining of the coat, and were of the same colour as the tails; the button-holes were usually embroidered, and thus the whole of the front of the coat became richly laced. Towards the end of the century the coats were made tight, and were fastened together in front by hooks, but the vestiges of the flaps remained in a double line of buttons, and in the front of the coat being of a different colour from that of the rest, and being richly laced. A uniform of this nature is still retained in some foreign armies. This seems also to explain the use of the term "facings" as applied to the collar and cuffs of a uniform, since, as we shall see hereafter, they would be of the same colour as these flaps. It may also explain the habit of braiding the front of a coat, as is done in our Hussar and other regiments.

In a "History of Male Fashions," published in the *London Chronicle* in 1762, we find that "surtouts have now

four laps on each side, which are called 'dog's ears;' when these pieces are unbuttoned, they flap backwards and forwards, like so many supernumerary patches just tacked on at one end, and the wearer seems to have been playing at backwords till his coat was cut to pieces. . . . Very spruce *smarts* have no buttons nor holes upon the breast of these their surtouts, save what are upon the ears, and their garments only wrap over their bodies like a morning gown." These dog's ears may now be seen in a very meaningless state on the breasts of the patrol-jackets of our officers, and this is confirmed by the fact that their jackets are not buttoned, but fastened by hooks.

In early times, when coats were of silk or velvet, and enormously expensive, it was no doubt customary to turn up the cuffs, so as not to soil the coat, and thus the custom of having the cuffs turned back came in. During the latter part of the seventeenth and during the eighteenth century, the cuffs were very widely turned back, and the sleeves consequently very short, and this led to dandies wearing large lace cuffs to their shirts.

The pictures of Hogarth and of others show that the coat cuffs were buttoned back to a row of buttons running round the wrist. These buttons still exist in the sleeves of a Queen's Counsel, although the cuffs are sewed back and the button-holes only exist in the form of pieces of braid. This habit explains why our soldiers now have their cuffs of different colours from that of their coats; the colour of the linings was probably determined for each regiment by the colonel for the time being, since he formerly supplied the clothing; and we know that the colour of the facings was by no means fixed until recently. The shape of the cuff has been recently altered in the line regiments, so that all the original meaning is gone.

In order to allow of turning back with ease, the sleeve was generally split on the outer side, and this split could be fastened together with a line of buttons

and embroidered holes. In Hogarth's pictures some two or three of these buttons may be commonly seen above the reversed cuff; and notwithstanding that at first the buttons were out of sight (as they ought to be) in the reversed part of the cuff, yet after the turning back had become quite a fixed habit, and when sleeves were made tight again, it seems to have been usual to have the button for the cuff sewed on to the proper inside, that is to say, the real outside of the sleeve.

The early stage may be seen in Hogarth's picture of the "Guards marching to Finchley," and the present rudiment is excellently illustrated in the cuffs of the same regiments now. The curious buttons and gold lace on the cuffs and collars of the tunics of the Life Guards have the like explanation, but this is hardly intelligible without reference to a book of uniforms, as for example Cannon's "History of the 2nd Dragoon Guards."

The collar of a coat would in ordinary weather be turned down and the lining shown; hence the collar has commonly a different colour from that of the coat, and in uniforms the same colour as have the cuffs, which form, with the collars, the so-called "facings." A picture of Lucien Bonaparte in Lacroix's work on Costume shows a collar so immense that were it turned up it would be as high as the top of his head. This drawing indicates that even the very broad stand-up collars worn in uniforms in the early part of this century, and of a different colour from that of the coat, were merely survivals of an older form of turn-down collar. In these days, notwithstanding that the same difference in colour indicates that the collar was originally turned down, yet in all uniforms it is made to stand up.

The pieces of braid or seams which run round the wrist in ordinary coats are clearly the last remains of the inversion of the cuffs.

TROUSERS.—I will merely observe that we find an intermediate stage between trousers and breeches in the pantaloen, in which the knee-buttons of the breeches

have walked down to the ankle. I have seen also a German servant who wore a row of buttons running from the knee to the ankle of his trousers.

Boots.—One of the most perfect rudiments is presented by top-boots. These boots were originally meant to come above the knee; and, as may be observed in old pictures, it became customary to turn the upper part down, so that the lining was visible all round the top. The lining being of unblackened leather, formed the brown top which is now worn. The original boot-tag may be observed in the form of a mere wisp of leather sewn fast to the top, whilst the real acting tag is sewn to the inside of the boot. The back of the top is also fastened up, so that it could not by any ingenuity be turned up again into its original position.

Again, why do we black and polish our boots? The key is found in the French *cirage*, or blacking. We black our boots because brown leather would, with wet and use, naturally get discoloured with dark patches, and thus boots to look well should be coloured black. Now, shooting boots are usually greased, and that it was formerly customary to treat ordinary boots in the same manner is shown by the following verse in the ballad of "Argentile and Curan":—

"He borrowed on the working daics
His holy russets oft,
And of the bacon's fat to make
His startops black and soft."

Startops were a kind of rustic high shoes. Fairholt in his work states that "the oldest kind of blacking for boots and shoes appears to have been a thick, viscid, oily substance." But for neat boots a cleaner substance than grease would be required, and thus wax would be thought of; and that this was the case is shown by the French word *cirer*, which means indifferently to "wax" or to "polish boots." Boots are of course polished because wax takes so good a polish. Lastly, patent-leather is an imitation of common blacking.

I have now gone through the principal articles of men's clothing, and have

shown how numerous and curious are the rudiments or "survivals," as Mr. Tylor calls them; a more thorough search proves the existence of many more. For instance, the various gowns worn at the Universities and elsewhere, afford examples. These gowns were, as late as the reign of Queen Elizabeth, simply upper garments,¹ but have survived into this age as mere badges. Their chief peculiarities consist in the sleeves, and it is curious that nearly all of such peculiarities point to various devices by which the wearing of the sleeves has been eluded or rendered less burdensome. Thus the plaits and buttons in a barrister's gown, and the slit in front of the sleeve of the B.A.'s gown, are for this purpose. In an M.A.'s gown the sleeves extend below the knees, but there is a hole in the side through which the arm is passed; the end of the sleeve is sewed up, but there is a kind of scollop at the lower part, which represents the narrowing for the wrist. A barrister's gown has a small hood sewed to the left shoulder, which would hardly go on to the head of an infant, even if it could be opened out into a hood shape.

It is not, however, in our dress alone that these survivals exist; they are to be found in all the things of our every-day life. For instance, anyone who has experienced a drive on a road so bad that leaning back in the carriage is impossible, will understand the full benefit to be derived from arm-slings such as are placed in first-class railway carriages, and will agree that in such carriages they are mere survivals. The rounded tracery on the outsides of railway carriages show the remnants of the idea that a coach was the proper pattern on which to build them; and the word "guard" is derived from the man who sat behind the coach and defended the passengers and mails with his blunderbuss.

In the early trains (1838-39) of the Birmingham Railway there were special "mail" carriages, which were made very narrow, and to hold only four in each compartment (two and two), so as to be like the coach they had just superseded.

¹ See figures, pp. 254, 311, Fairholt.

The words *dele*, *stet*, used in correcting proof-sheets, the words *sed vide* or *s.v.*, *ubi sup.*, *ibid.*, *loc. cit.*, used in footnotes, the sign "&" which is merely a corruption of the word *et*, the word *finis* until recently placed at the ends of books, are all doubtless survivals from the day when all books were in Latin. The mark Λ used in writing for interpolations appears to be the remains of an arrow pointing to the sentence to be included. The royal "broad-arrow" mark is a survival of the head of "a barbed javelin, carried by serjeants-at-arms in the king's presence as early as Richard the First's time."¹ Then again we probably mount horses from the left side lest our swords should impede us. The small saddle on the surcingle of a horse, the seams in the backs of cloth-bound books, and those at the backs of gloves are rudiments,—but to give a catalogue of such things would be almost endless. I have said enough, however, to show that by remembering that there is *nil sine causa*, the observation of even common things of every-day life may be made less trivial than it might at first sight appear.

It seems a general rule that on solemn or ceremonial occasions men retain archaic forms; thus it is that court dress is a survival of the every-day dress of the last century; that uniforms in general are richer in rudiments than common dress; that a carriage with a postilion is *de rigueur* at a wedding; and that (as mentioned by Sir John Lubbock) the priests of a savage nation, acquainted with the use of metals, still use a stone knife for their sacrifices—just as Anglican priests still prefer candles to gas.

The details given in this article, although merely curious, and perhaps insignificant in themselves, show that the study of dress from an evolutionary standpoint serves as yet one further illustration of the almost infinite ramifications to which natural selection and its associated doctrines of development may be applied.

GEORGE H. DARWIN.

¹ Fairholt, p. 580.

THE BALLOT.

THE Ballot is the law of the land: another point of the Charter has been conceded, and the genius of Radicalism (not without some latent fears of Conservative consequences) is once more triumphant. The powers of procrastination—so efficaciously exerted during the last, and not entirely quiescent during the present, session of Parliament—have done their worst: jest and argument—foreign example and home prejudice—oratory, bombastic and burlesque—all have failed, and “the gentlemen below the gangway” have triumphed, by the aid of the Ministry whom they more or less guide, over Conservatives, Whigs, Peelites (if any still remain), and all the host of “moderate” politicians by whom the Ballot has long been considered as little more than the inevitable subject of one evening’s debate “to please the Radicals,” with little idea that it would ever form part of a Ministerial programme, or be thrust down the throats of a doubting and distrustful party by the iron will of a powerful Minister. Since, then, the die is cast—the battle has been fought and won, and our elections, parliamentary and municipal, are henceforward to be conducted upon a principle new to England, and only partially understood by the generality of Englishmen—it is worth while to inquire somewhat into the nature of the change, and more especially into the “reason why” it has come upon us at last.

In considering the latter point, and remembering the difference of opinion which formerly prevailed upon this subject in the Liberal ranks, we must begin by a glance at the constitution of that overpowering majority which has recently carried the Ballot Bill through Parliament. The supporters of the Ballot may not unfairly be divided into three separate and distinct classes: First, those who believe in it as a panacea for intimidation, and at least a partial remedy

for bribery; secondly, those who think it a mechanical improvement upon our present method of voting, which has been rendered necessary by the great enlargement of the constituencies; thirdly, those who, either not caring about the Ballot one way or the other, or even, it may be just possible, disliking rather than admiring the theory of secret voting, have nevertheless adopted or “swallowed” it as part of the accepted programme of the political party to which they belong. That the Ballot, in some form or another, is popular with certain constituencies, appears tolerably well established by the fact of more than one Conservative candidate having announced his advocacy of the measure, hitherto so constantly and consistently opposed by the Conservative party. On the other hand, it may be doubted whether there exists that general and ardent desire for secret voting among the constituencies which the enthusiastic supporters of the Ballot would wish us to believe. The general election of 1868 turned principally upon the questions of the Irish Church Disestablishment, and the amount of confidence relatively bestowed by the electors upon Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli; and there was probably not one single contest the issue of which was decided in consequence of the opinions of the candidates upon the subject now under discussion. But be this as it may, and to whatever cause the result may be really due, the fact remains that in the year of grace 1872 we find ourselves face to face with the Ballot under circumstances which a very few years ago could have been scarcely anticipated or hoped for by its warmest admirers. It is scarcely to be ranked even in the category of party questions, nor would much surprise have been manifested if the leader of the Tory party had accepted it at the commencement of the present session. Had he

done so, indeed, he would have been no more obnoxious to the charge of tergiversation than many of the leaders of the Liberal party. For, up to a very recent period, the ablest and most prominent Liberals have, as a rule, been as much the opponents of secret voting as their political antagonists, and the presence of an advocate of the Ballot in a Liberal Cabinet was looked upon as a concession to the Radical element in the party, which would perhaps hardly have been tolerated but for the general conviction that the measure was so unlikely ever to be carried, that a vote in favour of this particular point of the Charter might be given by a Cabinet Minister without any chance of the unpleasant result of his finding himself in a majority against his colleagues.

It is interesting to recur to past debates upon this subject, as illustrating the different aspects under which particular points are viewed by statesmen of the same party at different times, and also as showing the opinions entertained by eminent men in years gone by upon questions which have recently formed the subject of earnest debate and controversy. Perhaps no better example could be quoted at the present moment than the words of a speech delivered in 1858, almost, it would appear, in a spirit of prophecy, so accurately do they foreshadow the arguments which have been employed in both Houses of Parliament during the present session. Upon the 8th June, 1858, Mr. Henry Berkeley brought forward his annual motion for leave to introduce "a Bill to cause the votes at Parliamentary elections to be taken by Ballot." Peace be with his ashes! His annual motion was always regarded by the House with interest and amusement, save when (as was occasionally the case) the hour of the division (which he always took) unfortunately clashed with that of dinner. But the genial twinkle in his eye, the friendly jocosity of his style, and the anecdotal variety with which he interspersed his speech, generally delivered from the front Opposition bench, secured to Mr. Berkeley's annual motion an amount of

popularity which it would have probably lacked in other hands. In 1858 the member for Bristol was quite equal to himself, and the debate which followed was well sustained. The following passages in one of the speeches then delivered are those to which we would call special attention on the present occasion:—

"If the Ballot were permissive, then it would be a trap for the timid; because, if a few persons, from fear of exposing themselves to a certain influence, gave their votes in secrecy, that influence would still equally act on them, because they would be suspected individuals. No person, whether landlord, employer, or customer, would be satisfied at the vote being given in secrecy; and the consequences, whatever they might be, would be the same whether the vote were given secretly or openly. If, on the other hand, the voter should be compelled by law to give a secret vote, that was imposing a restriction on free will and on the freedom of election totally incompatible with our national feelings and habits. But it would be in vain to attempt any such thing. *You must go further, and if you compel a man to vote in secret, you must make it penal in him to tell how he has voted.*"

Again:

"I defy you to invent any mode of voting, whether by putting a person in a secret chamber, or by any other human contrivance, which will prevent a man, if he has sufficient motive to know how his dependant voted, from visiting upon the voter who breaks his promise that breach of promise. Well, I say that publicity in the exercise of all great functions is an essential principle of the British Constitution; and that the electors exercise a trust. It has been said in reply, that they do not exercise a trust, but a right. *I contend that the exercise of the franchise, even if you had universal suffrage, would be a trust; for one individual is invested with the power of voting, not for his own personal advantage and interest, but for the interest and advantage of the nation.*" The speaker went on to argue that there is

"no security for the proper exercise of political functions, unless it be that security which public opinion affords," and that the adoption of the Ballot "would most injuriously affect the political spirit and institutions of the country;" for which reasons he opposed Mr. Berkeley's motion. We are writing just fourteen years after the delivery of the speech referred to, and the speaker was none other than Lord Palmerston, then and for eight subsequent years the leader of the Liberal party. And in the division (294 to 197) which negatived the motion we find among the majority the names of Sir George Lewis, Sir George Grey, Lord John Russell, and almost all the then leaders of the Liberal party, including amongst them the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone.

These things, however, are now legends of the past. Lord Palmerston's arguments of 1858 are held to be worth nothing in the mouths of the opponents of the Ballot in 1872, and those of his colleagues who still occupy seats in the House of Commons are steady supporters of Mr. Forster's Ballot Bill. A change has come o'er the spirit of their dream, and that which would have "most injuriously affected the spirit and institutions of the country" in 1858 has been discovered in 1872 to be a natural corollary and sequitur of household suffrage. In fact, we are all expected to hail the Ballot with delight. The Liberal who doubts is held to be scarcely worthy of the name, and the Opposition have been gradually schooled to believe that, after all, in its practical consequences and results, the Ballot will turn out to be an eminently Conservative measure. The truth or error of this statement we are both unable and unwilling to discuss;—unable, because no reliable data can be adduced upon which to found our argument; unwilling, because we are rather concerned with the general effect of the Ballot upon the constituencies than its possible particular effect upon political parties. Nor, indeed, is it likely that, supposing the system to be efficacious in removing the evils against which it is directed, either party can expect a cer-

tain and wide-spread advantage to the detriment of the other. Landlords, employers, customers, are of different politics in different localities, and the arbitrary nature of man which the Ballot is intended to control is not displayed exclusively by members of either political party. Therefore, before we can argue as to the balance of advantage which either party is likely to obtain, we must ascertain the number of arbitrary and domineering natures on either side; and even this will be insufficient unless accompanied by a statement as to the greater or less pliability of the natures with which each has to deal in his separate locality. As this would appear difficult, if not impossible information to obtain, it is evident that any argument upon the point can be nothing more than the wildest speculation.

It is of far more importance to speculate—if speculate we must—upon the manner in which, irrespective of party considerations, the working of the Ballot will make itself felt among the constituencies at large. And the one great question, at present involved in some doubt and obscurity, is whether it will not practically—and perhaps to a very great extent—diminish the number of those who come to the poll. It would be curious—if it were possible—to obtain a return of the motives which induced every elector, in any given constituency, to come to the poll at the last contest in which he voted. Here again we fall back on speculation, but a general acquaintance with the practices of elections, and some little knowledge of human nature, will enable us to gauge to some extent the motive power of the electoral roll.

As a matter of politeness we will suppose that no such thing as bribery, in any form recognized and punishable as such by law, has induced any elector in our model constituency to register his vote for a particular candidate. But, excluding from consideration all such base motives, it may be reasonably doubted whether more than twenty-five per cent. of those who vote do so from

real political conviction. Probably quite as many, if not more, vote on account of colour and of association with one or other political party, with neither real nor pretended knowledge of any of the great questions which are supposed to separate politicians. But what of the other fifty per cent. ? Some, no doubt, will vote from personal regard or esteem for a candidate, entirely irrespective of politics, but it may be safely asserted that a very large proportion exercise their franchise for the sake of pleasing somebody else. It is not intended to convey the idea that there is anything in this which is not innocent and legitimate. Favours conferred without reference to an election—work given when work was wanted, land let when land was earnestly desired, valuable custom bestowed, even kind words and a friendly manner, all operate to make the shopkeeper, the mechanic, the farmer, the artisan, who may not happen to entertain strong political convictions, desire to show gratitude by voting for a “friend’s friend,”—perhaps the only opportunity the elector may have of showing appreciation, perfectly honest and virtuous, of kindness received. The introduction of enforced secret voting will take away this opportunity, and in so doing will deprive a large portion of electors of their inducement to go to the poll. Nor will this be the only class similarly affected. The doubtful, or, as we should perhaps rather call them, the “doubted” men, no longer able to prove by open vote their ultimate decision in favour of one or other of the contending influences brought to bear upon them, will avoid giving offence to either by staying at home. And it is not improbable that, especially in the rural districts, there will be a fear and suspicion (however unjustifiable) of this new-fangled plan of walking into a compartment alone, and giving a vote after a strange and mysterious fashion, with certain pains and penalties dimly shadowed forth in case of certain misdoings which have never been misdoings before—there will be, moreover, a certain dislike of the very novelty of tickets and

ballot-boxes, and a dread of some unknown consequences—which will keep many an honest elector away from the polling-booths.

If there is any truth and force in these remarks, it follows that our elections henceforth will be to a very considerable extent left in the hands of the more active politicians in each constituency: the men who know, and the still larger class of men who fancy they know, something of the political questions of the day; the hot and zealous partisans—those to whom politics are an occupation and a business, not to say a pleasure, as distinguished from the larger body of their fellow-countrymen, who are only politicians when politics are forced upon them by the arrival of a general election with its bustle and excitement, and who will hardly be roused into political activity when neither bustle nor excitement are any longer the necessary concomitants of such arrival. It may possibly be held by some admirers of the English Constitution that this result is one desirable to be achieved, and that it is well that the affairs of an election should be left to those who care for and understand, or at least try to understand, political matters. We confess, however, to entertaining a somewhat different opinion. The “inert mass of electors,” if it be permitted to describe one’s fellow-countrymen by such a disrespectful term, are really among the most valuable of their class. Not being professional politicians or “party men,” they take a more calm and sober view of the circumstances of an election and the merits of the candidates before them, and, after making every allowance for the various influences by which they are surrounded, there is an element of independent intelligence among them which constantly guides them to a just decision as to the bestowal of their votes. If the introduction of secret voting, the abolition of public nominations, and the practical banishment of the outward and visible signs of a contested election should, as we apprehend may be the case, lessen the interest which these men take in elections, render them more indifferent

as to the exercise of the franchise, and, in a word, deaden the political life of England, it may be questioned whether the country will be a gainer by the change.

There is another result, too, likely to follow the adoption of the Ballot, to the possibility or probability of which little attention has been given by those who, in and out of Parliament, have debated the question. Up to the present time, the publication of the state of the poll from hour to hour has enabled electors who preferred one of two coalescing candidates to the other, and both to a third of opposite politics, to ascertain whether the position of their favourite would justify their "splitting" the vote. By this means the political feeling of a constituency has rarely been disappointed by the indulgence of individual preference. For example, in a constituency of 3,500 electors, it might happen that 2,000 infinitely preferred the Blue candidates A and B to the Yellow candidate C, whilst 500 or 600 of the 2,000 might wish to see A "safe," at all events. Under the old system, A's friends, hanging back until they had seen the relative strength of parties to be such that their favourite would not be injured by their "splitting" their votes, would have probably done so, and secured the election of both their candidates. But since under the new system there will be no publication of the poll, A's friends may be afraid to endanger their man, and, by adopting the plan of "plumping" to secure him at all events, may lead to the return with him of C, although the latter may have the support of only a minority of the constituency, and would have had little chance under the open system.

The only remedy for this will be for the electors to place themselves wholly and unreservedly in the hands of the "wire-pullers," and implicitly yield their votes up to the dictation of the election agents, whose duty it will be to "manipulate" constituencies, and to work them as if by machinery wherever there is sufficient electoral docility to enable them to do so. This probably will turn out to be one of the most certain effects of the

Ballot, viz. the merging of individual action in party organization. Even under the open system of voting, we are not without experience of the consequences of such a scheme. At the last general election, the working (for the first time) of what is known as the "Minority Clause" necessitated the employment of some such action in the City of London. The Liberal party had good reason to believe that they had a considerable majority upon the electoral roll, but, as each elector could only vote for three candidates, whilst four members were to be returned, careful manipulation was required in order to distribute the votes of that majority in the most effective manner. Accordingly, individual preference was ignored—individual action was as far as possible destroyed, and whole sections of the party voted *en masse* "by the card" for the three candidates to whom their votes had been apportioned by the wire-pullers. So admirably, indeed, was this arrangement carried out, that it would very probably have succeeded had it not been broken up by a report (true or untrue) in the middle of the day that the friends of one candidate were acting in violation of the agreement and exercising their individual preference. The possibility, however, of such a manipulation of a constituency was abundantly shown, and of course the process would be one infinitely more easy of accomplishment in the case of a comparatively small number of electors. So necessary, indeed, would it become, that we may regard its establishment as an inevitable consequence of the Ballot in constituencies where party feeling may be strong enough, and party organization sufficiently matured, to carry it out. Hence probably will follow, as another result, that local management in such constituencies will, to a greater extent than is at present the case, become subservient to central agency, and that wire-pullers at the "Carlton" or the "Reform" will have greater power than ever in the selection of candidates and the management of elections. Thus another step will have been taken in

the direction of "centralization" as opposed to local self-government.

But as these organizations become more and more recognized and better understood, it may be doubted whether they will not be employed for less legitimate purposes than the mere marshalling of the strength of a party vote in the most effective manner. What will be more easy than the combination of corrupt electors under the direction of a clever agent? Isolated cases of bribery will, it may perhaps be granted, be less frequent in future elections, and to that extent the chances of "purity of election" may have been increased. But if the disease be so extensively inoculated in our political system as disclosures before parliamentary committees and commissions lead us to suppose, here is another form in which it may reasonably be expected to break out. The nature of a man who is willing to give a bribe, and of another who is willing to receive the same, cannot be and have not been changed by any alteration in the manner in which the consideration for the bribe—i.e. the vote—is to be given. Proof of the fulfilment of that consideration may have been—certainly has been—rendered less easy; but to a very great extent that difficulty is to be got over, if the agent of the briber succeeds in showing fifty, one hundred, or two hundred corrupt electors, that combination under his direction will secure them their reward, payment for results being of course the understood method of procedure. Nor need the "wire-puller" be the agent of the bribing candidate. The formation of clubs for electioneering purposes may be carried out with perfect ease, and the leader or president of a club may negotiate for the sale of the marketable article with which he is entrusted by his fellow-members without the smallest practical difficulty being interposed by the Ballot. In fact, so far as bribery is concerned, the most probable effect of the Ballot upon corrupt constituencies will be to condense the isolated cases of bribery into an organized system, difficult, if not impossible, of detection.

It must be owned, however, that with

regard to intimidation the Ballot stands in a very different position, and for a very plain and sufficient reason. In the case of bribery we have to deal with two persons—the briber and the bribee—who combine to transgress the law for their mutual benefit. In the case of intimidation one person compels another to perform an act against his will. There is consequently no combination possible to defeat the law. The elector can, if he pleases, escape the intimidator, and the power of the latter is minimized if not destroyed. The opponents and false friends of the Ballot did indeed do their utmost to preserve this power by the insertion in the Bill of clauses enacting what is known as the "Optional Ballot," which was supported by plausible arguments, and actually carried in the House of Lords. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that had these clauses been suffered to remain in the Bill, the efficacy of the Ballot to check or diminish intimidation would have been utterly destroyed. Had the voter been either allowed the option whether to vote openly or in secret, or had he been permitted to show his ballot-paper to an agent in the polling-booth before depositing it in the ballot-box, nothing would have been easier for the intimidator and the briber to ascertain the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of every promise, and to act accordingly. The good sense of the House of Commons rejected those clauses, and the Lords, as might have been expected, yielded upon a point in which they were clearly wrong, and in their adherence to which they would have met with no support from public opinion.

As far, therefore, as intimidation is concerned, the Ballot may be said to strike a blow at the exercise of that unconstitutional power, and *pro tanto* to improve our electoral system. There may, however, be heretics and sceptics as to the extent and magnitude of the intimidation which has prevailed in England under our old system of elections. No doubt there has been a certain amount of it, and every now and then the public mind has been excited by the

narration of the wrongs of some tenant who has had to leave his farm, and some tradesman who has lost custom, owing to his exercise of the franchise according to his conscience. But the truth of the matter is, that these things neither are, nor in the nature of things could be, of very general occurrence, for the best of all reasons, that they defeat their own object. Let it be known that a tenant of "Blue" politics has been turned out of his farm by a "Red" landlord for voting for the "Blue" candidate, and the cause of the latter receives at once an impetus highly objectionable to the oppressor, even if the victim be not exalted into a martyr, and probably, in the long run, actually bettered in his circumstances by the transaction. Public opinion is in the present day so easily brought to bear by means of the penny press, to say nothing of the various organizations existing throughout the country, that no gross act of intimidation can easily be committed without the certainty of a recoil upon the perpetrator, and few men will voluntarily incur the risk of such a recoil.

There are, doubtless, a certain number of electors throughout the country who probably vote more or less under compulsion, and who may be glad of the opportunity of escaping therefrom. The escape, however, may not be always complete, or the result entirely satisfactory. One arrangement under the new law enlarges the number of polling-places. Suppose a polling-place with three hundred electors, mostly tenants or tradesmen, under the influence of a great proprietor who takes an active interest in the election. He canvasses closely, and obtains for his candidate two hundred and fifty promises of support. The poll is taken and the aforesaid candidate polls but one hundred and fifty votes against one hundred given for his opponent. The actual promise-breakers may be undiscoverable, but what an uncomfortable atmosphere of distrust and suspicion will prevail, disagreeable alike to the landlord, to those who have kept and to those who have broken the promises given. There may be those who believe

that in a moral and social point of view the "intimidation" (to call it by its harshest name) would have been a less evil than these consequences of its defeat. The above is doubtless an extreme case, but it illustrates one possible evil of our new electoral system.

But carp and cavil as we may, the measure has been carried, and we have only to make the best of it. Whether it be really popular or not is a question which the next general election may do something to elucidate. It is probable that no inconsiderable portion of the constituencies will greatly object to that which is undoubtedly the part of the scheme least open to objection—namely, the abolition of public nominations. To yell, shout, bawl, hoot down an obnoxious candidate, and occasionally pelt him with unpleasant and unsavoury missiles, has been from time immemorial part of the sacred and undoubted privileges of an English mob. Nomination days have been gala days, even in well-regulated constituencies in which pelting has been unknown; and especially in county elections, the yeomen riding in procession, the bands, the carriages, and, above all, the fair dames decked with the colours of their favourite candidate, have formed a spectacle of much beauty and interest, appreciated by everyone, save, perhaps, the unfortunate aspirants after senatorial honours, who have had to bear no inconsiderable share of the attendant expense. The abolition of nomination days will probably not be popular. Yet it would be difficult to justify their existence in the present day. Not only are they *not* the only—or the best—way of ascertaining the opinions of a candidate, but it is the exception rather than the rule if he is ever allowed to declare any opinions at all upon the hustings. His address, published in innumerable newspapers, and the public meetings at which he is obliged to harangue during his canvass, bring him sufficiently face to face with the constituency, and the public nomination has become little more than an expensive farce, which may well be suffered to pass away.

Whether the other provisions of the Ballot Bill will be relished by the constituencies remains to be proved. As far as we have gone, the only sign, one way or the other, has come to us in the shape of a plaintive cry from certain High Sheriffs, whose trouble and expense, as returning officers, seem likely to be increased. We confess to a general and cordial sympathy with High Sheriffs, who furnish the only instance in this country of gentlemen thrust into exalted office entirely without—and generally very much against—their consent, and made to pay for the honour which they would gladly have declined. In these days, when nobody who can help it does any work for nothing, and everybody wants more than he gets, the case of

the High Sheriffs is peculiarly hard, and probably nothing but the paucity of their numbers prevents a "strike" on the part of the injured individuals. It may, perhaps, happen that when the Ballot is in full operation other complaints will follow. We do not care to prophesy upon this point. It is sufficient for us to have pointed out some of the doubts and difficulties which seem to surround the question, and some of the unexpected results which may possibly follow; and having done this in an open and impartial spirit, and with every hope that the success of the measure may be complete, and may entirely falsify all contrary anticipations, we take our leave of the Ballot Act of 1872.

FORMER DAYS.

(From the French of Philippe Théolier.)

DIDST thou linger in the country of our dreams,
When I was forced from thee and that dear land?
Dost wander still by those now lonely streams,
Where every eve our future course we planned?
Sitting to-day in sadness near those trees
Where happy hours we shared, dost ever sigh
For hopes we framed, while drinking in the breeze?
Ah! they were bright, those dreams of days gone by!

Call back those years to mind: when, children both,
Our life ran on, all shadowed o'er with joy!
When day by day the radiant star of troth
Shone through our heart in gleams without alloy!
Then, when thou sang'st in Nature's bosom shrined,
Each feathered songster paused to drink thy lay:
Whilst I thy waist with blooming garlands twined—
How fresh they were, those flowers of childhood's day!

Of through the forest's dim mysterious shade,
Tracking each hidden path, we loved to trip;
While in each spring, half-laughing, half-afraid,
Thy dimpled dainty feet were wont to dip;
Nests, too, we sought, which woodland gales caress
As 'neath the friendly boughs they sheltering lie:
My lips scarce dared thy snowy hand to press—
Though it was pure, that kiss of days gone by!

MARWOOD TUCKER.